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A Forgotten Psalter
and other Essays

A Forgotten Psalter and Other Essays

By

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A FORGOTTEN PSALTER

IT is now generally conceded that the Victorian era was a great one in Science, Letters and Art, and a deplorable one in Music. In Science and Letters especially "there were giants in those days"; in Music we had only pigmies, and the standard of musical taste would seem to have reached its nadir.

The pigmies however bequeathed us one legacy in the shape of the Victorian hymn-tune, from the effects of which we are only slowly recovering. But the editors of the latest English hymn-books have not only given us better hymn-tunes; they have restored to their original forms the fine old Psalm Tunes of our ancestors, which Victorian editors had mutilated, deprived of their rhythm, and reduced to "a procession of minims" in accordance with the depraved taste of their time.

There is a pronounced reaction in favour of the virile rhythms and strong harmonies of the old Psalm Tunes, and the names at least of the old compilers (Day, Damon, Playford, Este, Ravenscroft, etc.) are familiar in quires and places where they sing. The only matter for surprise (in this satisfactory state of public opinion) is the neglect of Alison's Psalter—in some respects the best of them all.

The revived interest in Psalm Tunes in England is the more satisfactory since metrical psalmody, *as such*, has no official place in English church services; such Psalm Tunes as are used only occurring as settings to ordinary hymns in the books.

In Scotland it is different. Metrical psalmody has always held an official position in the Established Church of the country, and to-day all the Presbyterian bodies have jointly adopted an official book ("The Psalter in Metre, and Scripture Paraphrases"), which is provided with a complete set of tunes.

And here comes the strange part of the story: Scotland produced a metrical Psalter of her own in 1564, complete

as to its words, and in which the tunes reached their final stage of completion in 1635. But looking through the latest edition of the Scottish "Psalter in Metre" we find that out of a total of 226 tunes, only a "baker's dozen" of the original Psalter of 1635 have survived, and these appear only in the mutilated form to which English hymn-books of last century had reduced them.

Since Scotland has so completely abandoned her old Psalm Tunes it is not surprising that the world at large has gathered the impression that the musical contents of the old Scottish Psalter were not worth preserving. So completely has that impression prevailed in England that Grove's Dictionary, which gives elaborate dissertations on the English Psalters, dismisses the Scottish one in a paragraph of less than three lines—rendered almost contemptuous by its enclosure within brackets by way of a mere parenthesis.*

I had striking testimony to the prevalence of this belief in the answer of a hymn-book editor when I asked him why he had not laid the Scottish Psalter under greater contribution. He replied: "The tunes are not up to much, or I should have done so."

It may therefore be not unprofitable to examine the claims of this book which has been rejected by the land of its birth, ignored by Grove, and of whose contents the musical world at large is ignorant. It once played a big part in Scottish national history; it plays no such part now. In the recent revival of virile hymn-music, our latest hymn-books have garnered rich sheaves from every known Psalter. Their reaping in the Scottish field is negligible. Whether this argues the negligibility of the Scottish Psalter itself, or whether it is a case of critical obliquity, or mere incurious neglect on the part of musicians it will be my endeavour to show.

To the alleged negligibility of the Psalter no musician

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* *The new "Grove" of 1927 makes no alteration beyond removing the brackets.*

could subscribe after careful examination of its contents. If the musical world has been inappreciative or neglectful it has had no excuse for either attitude, for the following reason.

In 1864 the Rev. Neil Livingstone, the Free Kirk Minister of Stair by Ayr, published a complete reprint of the 1635 edition of the Psalter, together with 111 large folio pages of dissertations and notes of his own.

The lack of interest in Scottish Psalmody in those days is indicated in Mr. Livingstone's statement that, as no publisher would accept the work, it was printed through the private munificence of Mr. William Euing who founded the library in Glasgow which bears his name.

The standard of taste in 1864 is best indicated in Mr. Livingstone's editorial comments, and his defence of the old tunes might have been written for that present-day type of mind which adopts a superior attitude to old music as compared with the more "civilised" Victorian type. He says:

> "One thing is obvious, that the merits of the old tunes are in no way compromised by a state of opinion produced by such causes." (N.B. He here alludes to "the fallacy which . . . has held the Scottish mind in its grasp that it matters not whether the musical material or execution is better or worse if the heart be rightly exercised.") "Had they fallen into neglect in a time when other materials were successfully cultivated the inference might have been drawn that better substitutes had been found. But such neglect . . . proves nothing but the lack of knowledge and taste necessary to their due appreciation."

He concludes with a noble retort to the critics who hold that art-works of the past must necessarily be more "crude" and less "civilised" than those of the present. Its sarcasm is all the more deadly by reason of the studied moderation of his language:

> "The estimate to be formed of ancient statuary, architecture, or literature, which have filled the world with

their fame, does not depend upon the attainments or opinions of the descendants of those who produced these works of genius."

Mr. Livingstone's regrets over the supersession of the old Scottish Psalter; his eulogy of its tunes; his plea for their restoration, and the reasons he gives in support of all three might have been written today—so enlightened are they, and in such striking contrast with the popular taste of his time.

Seeing that he claimed no musicianship, it is all the more remarkable that his dissertation on the music should read so convincingly. Naturally, he had not the same sources of information on modal music which obtain with us today; Burney and Hawkins were still accepted as musical authorities in his time. But although he bows to such authority in general, he not infrequently takes Burney to task, and exposes his superficial criticism where modal music is concerned.

Considering the scanty material at his disposal it was only natural that he should sometimes be at fault himself, but taken as a whole, his judgments are sane, sensible and sound, and indicate that whatever he lacked in the way of data he made up for in the really remarkable range of his sheer musical intuition.

* * *

Since his unique work was ignored by his own generation, and is unknown to the present one, it may not be out of place to present the claims of the Scottish Psalter this time to a generation more alive to the beauties of ancient music than was Mr. Livingstone's. But before we cast stones at the taste of 1864, and before we congratulate ourselves on our lately acquired appreciation of our English Psalters, we would do well to remember that we ourselves are still bestowing unmerited neglect on the one English Psalter which shows perhaps the purest counterpoint of them all—Alison's.

* * *

The chief difference which strikes us between the English and Scottish psalters is that both in words and tunes the

latter shows a greater metrical freedom and a wider rhythmic variety.

To take a typical example: In Este's Psalter (taking into account the number of psalms sung to the same tune) there are 69 tunes. Of these, no less than 46 are in Common (or "Ballad") Metre; 3 are in Short Metre, and 4 in Long Metre, leaving only 16 out of all the rich variety of metres which were at disposal. In other words, there is a monotonous succession of 46 tunes all in one metre, out of a total of 69.

The Scottish Psalter approximates more closely to the Genevan one in the variety of its metres. It moreover has 143 tunes as contrasted with Este's 69.

In versification it shows the following varieties: 99 psalms in Common Metre; 11 in Long Metre, and 5 in Short Metre. It has also 35 more psalms which exhibit no less than *twenty-seven varieties* of metre. A characteristic beauty of the Genevan Psalter is its abundance of those feminine endings so noticeably absent from English metrical psalms, and in laying the Genevan Psalter so largely under contribution, the Scottish one acquires greater richness and variety than the English ones. It is true the English composers by subtle devices in the way of cross rhythms in their counterpoint did attempt to mitigate the metrical sameness of the words, but that does not affect the point at issue.

The greater metrical variety in the Scottish Psalter naturally gave the composers of the tunes greater scope. But even when they were confined to Ballad Metre they shook off its monotony in rather bolder, or at any rate more forthright fashion, than their English contemporaries. Where the latter fought metrical monotony with subtle *contrapuntal* devices, the Scotsmen got their variety by *melodic* means. I take three examples haphazard, which will show how the Scotsmen met metrical poverty with rhythmic richness and variety. All three psalms are in Ballad Metre, but observe the difference in their musical rhythms.

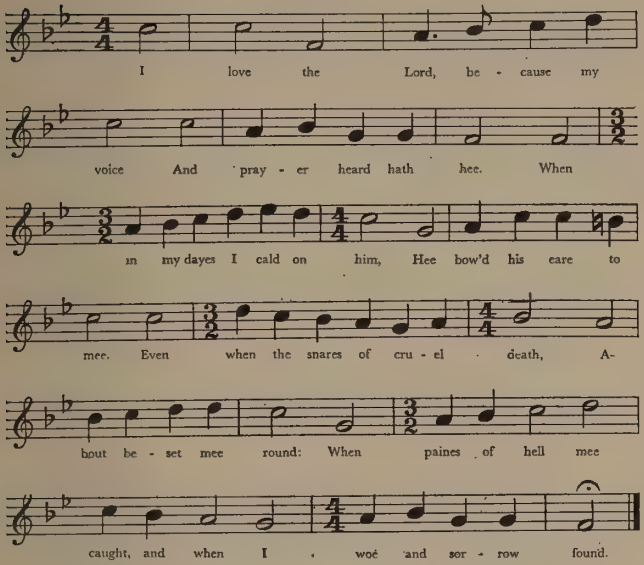
PSALM II

Why did the Gen-tiles tu-mults raise? What
rage was in their brain? Why did the Jew-ish peo-ple
muse? See-ing all is but vain. The
Kings and Ru-lers of the Earth Con-spire and
are all bent, A-gainst the Lord and
Christ his Son, Whom hee a-mongst us sent.

PSALM VII

O Lord my God I put my trust And
con-fi-dence in thee: Save mee from them that mee pur-
sue, And eke de-li-ver mee. Least
like a Ly-on hee mee teare, And rent in
pie-ces small: Whilst there is none to
suc-cour mee, And ride mee out of thrall

PSALM CXVI



But to return for a moment to the contents of the respective Psalters: the Scottish one—like the Genevan and English ones—included metrical settings of other things than psalms. Alison's Psalter, for instance, prefaces the psalms with metrical versions of the following:

Veni Creator.
The humble Sute of a Sinner.
Venite exultemus.
Te Deum.
The Song of the Children.
Magnificat.
Nunc dimittis.
Quicunque vult.
The Lamentation.
The Lord's Prayer.
The Ten Commandments.
The complaint of a Sinner.

After the Psalms (which occupy the body of the book) come:

The Lord's Prayer (another setting).
The Creede.
Da pacem.
The Lamentation (another setting).
A Prayer.

This "Prayer" was a favourite with English psalter compilers. It reads:

Preserve us Lord by Thy dear word;
From Pope and Turk defend us Lord;
Which both would thrust out of his Throne
Our Lord Jesus Christ Thy dear Son.

Este's Psalter includes all the above, with the addition of:

A Prayer to the Holy Ghost.
A Thanksgiving.
A Prayer for the Queene's most excellent Majestie.

These "extras" in the Scottish Psalter were as follows:

The Ten Commandments of Almightie God.
A Prayer.
The Lorde's Prayer.
Veni Creator.
The Song of Simeon.
The XII Articles of the Christian Beliefe.
The humble Sute of a Sinner.
The Lamentation.
The Complaint of a Sinner.
The Song of the Blessed Virgine Mary.
The Lamentation (II).
The Song of Moses.
A Thanksgiving after the receiving of the Lord's Supper.
A Spirituall Song.

It is noteworthy that the "Prayer" in the Scottish Psalter contains no reference either to Pope or Turk.

Whether or not this means that Scotsmen were immune from the Englishman's fear of Rome and Constantinople is a moot point; at any rate Scotland did not publicly pray for deliverance from either.

* * *

Having disposed of the above mentioned "extras," we can now study the plan of the Scottish Psalter proper, with regard to its music.

In its well-ordered arrangement it exhibits a superiority over English Psalters, the causes of which lie deeper than at first appears.

Its musical divisions (taking them in historical order of succession, from the first Psalter of 1564 to its final stage in 1635) are:

1. The Proper Tunes.
2. The Common Tunes.
3. Psalms in Reports.

1. THE PROPER TUNES

A Proper Tune was that assigned to a particular psalm, the idea no doubt being suggested by the practice in vogue regarding secular tunes. As in the English and continental psalters, this principle was not always carried out in full. The same tune sometimes does duty for more than one psalm, but at any rate no psalm is unprovided with a tune, and no psalm (save 124) has more than one.

2. THE COMMON TUNES

These are all in Common Metre and are placed at the beginning of the book. No words are assigned to them (as in the case of the Proper Tunes); the idea being that they could be used for any psalm of their own metre. In the first musical edition of the Psalter they numbered only eight (they were there called the Common *Tones*), but in the edition of 1635 they had reached a total of thirty-one.

3. THE PSALMS IN REPORTS

After the Common Tunes, and immediately preceding Psalm I (the beginning of the Psalter proper, with its

Proper Tunes) come several tunes bearing the intriguing heading "Heere are some Psalmes in Reports."

When put into modern score (in those days the separate vocal parts—*i.e.* Treble, Alto, Tenor, Bass—of any musical composition were either printed in different books, or in separate parts of the same book) these "Psalms in Reports" resolve themselves into nothing more or less than short contrapuntal motets with a psalm tune as the *canto fermo* (usually in the Tenor part). Like the Common Tunes they have no words attached to the music. This—to modern eyes—looks like an unnecessary addition to the difficulty of singing them, but there was evidently a purpose behind the omission of the words, as we shall see later.

The term "In Reports" evidently applied to a piece of free counterpoint, more or less in "imitation." In fact, Playford (in his *Introduction to the Skill of Musick*. 1694) uses the term "Reports" as the equivalent of "imitation." Livingstone—although he does not appear to have had access to Playford—brings his general scholarship and his powers of observation to bear on the question, and hits the nail accurately on the head.

> "It may have been understood to mean either a *carrying back*, that is, after a passage has been started by one harmonic part, taking it back to the same point and starting it anew by another; or *carrying again*, that is, repeating the passage by the parts in succession. Or if the term referred to echoing, answering, or what is now called Imitation, the idea is still the same."

After this rough summary of the musical contents of the Psalter, we now begin to see something of what was at the back of its compilers' heads when they initiated it. (For it must be noted that, unlike other psalters, the above-described plan and order prevailed from the very first edition. Any subsequent alterations—culminating in the edition of 1635—were in the nature of amplification, not of rearrangement.)

The English psalters contain a preponderating number of tunes for verses of only four lines each (8686 Iambic).

Dr. Frere, in his learned introduction to the Historical Edition of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, explains this by the fact that the simpler rhythms of these tunes had a stronger popular appeal than more elaborate or varied ones. No doubt these same considerations obtained in Scotland. But the compilers of the Scottish Psalter were too artistic to scrap (from the body of the Psalter) any good tunes because of their mere contrapuntal or rhythmic difficulty. They left the more complicated psalm-tunes intact, but for the benefit of the weaker brethren who found them difficult they printed separately these "Common Tunes" which could be sung to any of the ninety-nine Common Metre psalms,—surely a wide enough selection to satisfy any congregation.

Another indication of the artistic instinct (to say nothing of its insight into human nature) of the Scottish compilers appears in the inclusion of those "Psalms in Reports" which have so intrigued modern musicians.

Just as the Common Tunes were a concession to *congregations* who might boggle at the complex rhythms of the "Proper" psalm tunes, so were the "Psalms in Reports" apparently a concession to *choirs* who might not relish the total abolition of the contrapuntal music to which they had been accustomed. And, to my mind, the intentional omission of the words is significant. Although each of these elaborated pieces of music has no words under the vocal parts, the special psalm to which the music belongs is always stated. The words of it would naturally be found in the body of the Psalter, but there still remained the problem of how they were to be fitted by "Trebble, Contra, Tenor and Bassus" to their respective parts.

Here again one seems to see the pawky humour of the Scottish compilers peeping out.

As is well known, choirs in those days were manned by skilled singers who (like all other medieval guilds) jealously guarded the mysteries of their craft. In such musical forms as were conveyed to the uninitiate only by terrifying titles ("Musica Ficta," "Proportio Sesquial-

tera," "Prolatio minor" and such like), the object was to maintain the mystery which surrounded them.

Hence, when music was (in those days) written down, it was not (as it is today) so written as to be intelligible to the multitude. It was intelligible only to the initiate. So it was a distinctly humorous touch on the part of the Scottish compilers to flatter the trained choristers by a sop in the shape of at least a few psalm-settings which nobody but themselves would be able to sing. For they would all understand the rules which governed "Text-underlaying."

It would seem as though the disciples of John Knox, who compiled the Psalter, were not such "dour bodies" as is commonly supposed.

* * *

Another striking difference between the English and Scottish Psalters is that, whereas in the English ones we have the names of those who added the counterpoint to each tune, no names are appended to the tunes in the Scottish book. The counterpoints in the Scottish book are not so highly polished, nor do they flow so freely as those in the English Psalters, but they have a rugged dignity and grandeur that is all their own.

Beyond a few names, which by correlative evidence we are able to connect with the music, we shall never know what Scottish musicians were employed in this important task of adding contrapuntal embellishments to the old psalm melodies. But whoever they were, their work shows a fine artistry, and later generations are all the poorer for having turned their backs on it.

* * *

I have already mentioned the extensive borrowing of the Psalter from the Genevan (all psalters of that period borrowed freely from each other), but the extent of its borrowing from the English psalters is highly interesting. It occurs chiefly in the Common Tunes. The names of the 31 Common Tunes in the edition of 1635 occur in the following order: The Old Common Tune, The Kinges

Tune, the Dukes Tune, the English Tune, the French Tune, the London Tune, the Stilt Tune, and the Dumfermling, Dundie, Abbay, Chesshire, Glasgow, Culros, Martyrs, Glaston, Wigtoun, Innerness, Jedburgh, Couper, Glenluce, Irving, Newtoun, Galloway, Melros, Dumbar, Elgin, Monros, Maxtoun, Cathness, Durhame, and Winchester Tunes.

None of these tunes appear in any continental psalter, so their authorship rests between England and Scotland. Which of the two countries produced any given tune can be decided with fair certainty by comparing the dates of the psalters (English or Scottish) in which it appears. Taking the tunes which are common to both English and Scottish psalters, the state of the case is as follows. (N.B. Where a second name appears against a tune, it is the one given it by Ravenscroft in 1621, and is the name by which

Tune	First appearance in Scottish Psalter	First appearance in English Psalter	Name of English Psalter
Old Common	1564	1592	Este
London-Cambridge	1602	1579	Daman
English	,,	1592	Este
Dundie-Windsor	1615	,,	,,
Dukes	,,	1621	Ravenscroft
Dumfermling	,,	,,	,,
Martyrs	,,	,,	,,
Kinges	,,	,,	,,
French-Dundee	,,	,,	,,
Stilt-York	,,	,,	,,
Abbay	,,	,,	,,
Glasgow	,,	,,	,,
Munros-Rochester	1633	1592	Este
Chesshire	1634	,,	,,
Durhame	1635	1621	Ravenscroft
Winchester	,,	1592	Este

the tune is known in modern English hymnbooks. I do not quote the melodies of any of the tunes, as the only ones which matter can be found in *The English Hymnal*, *Songs of Syon*, or *Songs of Praise*.)*

The remainder of the 31 tunes (save Newtoun), *i.e.* Elgin 1633, Galloway 1634, and Culros, Glaston, Wigtoun, Innerness, Jedburgh, Couper, Glenluce, Irving, Newtoun, Melros, Dumbar, Maxtoun, Cathness 1635, do not appear in any English psalter and may therefore be assumed to be of Scottish origin.

Ravenscroft in his Psalter (1621) includes 16 of the Common Tunes under discussion, and classifies them thus:

SCOTTISH	7—Kings, Dukes, Abby, Dumfermling, Dundy (*i.e.* "French" in Scottish Psalter), Glascow, Martyrs.
NORTHERNE	3—Yorke ("Stilt" in Scottish Ps.), Durham, Cheshire (called Chester in table of contents).
ENGLISH	5—Cambridge, ("London" in Scottish Ps.), Windsor ("Dundee" in Scottish Ps.), Rochester ("Monros" in Scottish Ps.), Winchester, Oxford (a variant of the "Old Common").
LOW DUTCH	1—English.

These two classifications I have given will serve to explain the confusion which has arisen from one tune (see *English Hymnal* No. 43) being entitled "Dundee" in England, and "French" in Scotland; another being entitled "Dundee" in Scotland and "Windsor" in England (see *English Hymnal* 332); and "The Stilt" of Scottish hymnbooks becoming the "York" of English ones (see *English Hymnal* 472), and so on.

Livingstone says "Nothing seems to be known of the import of the name 'Stilt,'" but I think a glance at the

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almost grotesque skips of the melody will reveal the name as another (and very obvious) piece of Scottish humour.

Although Ravenscroft gives "The English Tune" of the Scottish Psalter to Holland, it is more likely that the Scottish classification of it as "English" is correct, especially as it first appears (against psalm 4) in Este's Psalter (1592), and is not found in any Dutch one. It was included in the Middleburgh edition of the Scottish Psalter in 1602, and the Batavian name of the printer (Schilders) may have been responsible for Ravenscroft's mistake.

In spite of its title, Ravenscroft is probably right in attributing "Monros" (the old name of "Montrose") to England, as it first appears in his Psalter, under the name "Rochester." Livingstone says "In Scotland it appears as 'Glasgow' in 1633 and as 'Monros' in 1635." This is not quite correct, as one of my MS. scores of it is taken from Melvill's (Aberdeen) edition of the Scottish Psalter, published in sixteen-*twenty*-three. It is there called "The Glasgow Tone." It appears as "Monros" in the edition of 1635, where its former name "Glasgow" is given to a different tune altogether.

As to the artistic merits of the Psalter a very few examples will suffice. I have given examples of the care expended on securing rhythmic variety. Equal pains would seem to have been taken to improve the counterpoint as edition succeeded edition. Compare the following two versions of the well-known French-Dundee tune. Notice how the "lumpy" bass of the earlier edition gives place to the more easy flow of the second. Compared with the more polished setting in Ravenscroft's Psalter (see *English Hymnal* 43, alternative version) even the second example sounds rather stark, but one has to remember that England at that period was far ahead of most other nations in musical skill.

It is interesting to note how boldly the Scotsmen seized the varied Genevan metres and made them their own, while the English Psalters were content to rub along with

FRENCH (OR DUNDEE)
[MELODY IN TENOR]

Scottish Psalter of 1623

The same tune as it appears in the Scottish Psalter of 1635

the tame jingles of Sternhold and Hopkins. The following example is typical, save in the matter of the melody, in which the Scotsmen follow the Genevan original more closely than was usually the case. I give melody and words of psalm CXXI, first in their Genevan form, and then as they appear in the Scottish Psalter. The melody is in the 8th Mode; the metre 866877 iambic. I have ventured to harmonise the Scottish version according to the Mode, and in keeping with the idiom of the period.

I

Vers les monts j'ai le - vé mes yeux, Pen - sant

a - voir d'en - haut Le se - cours qu'il me faut: Mais

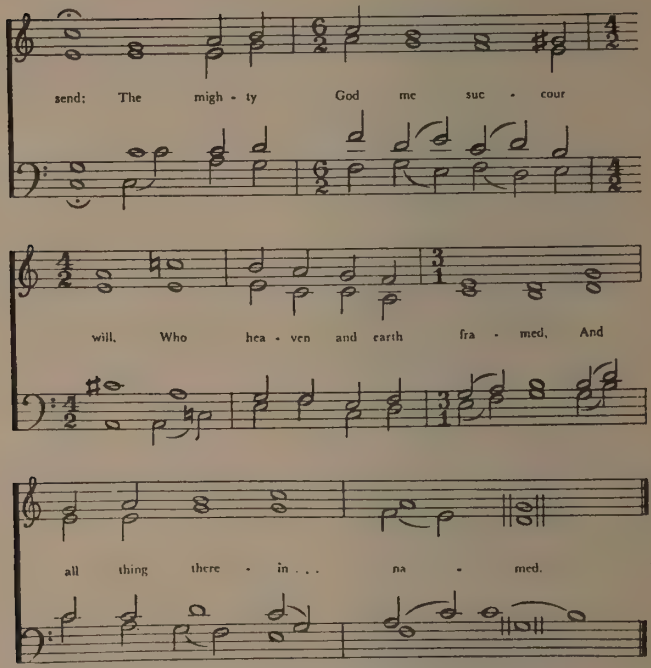
en. Dieu qui a fait les cieux, Et cet - tre

ter - re ron - de, Main - te - nant je me fon - de

II

I lift mine eyes to Si - on hill, From

whence I do at - tend; That suc - cour God me



One of the most notable examples of rich and diversified metre is Psalm LXXXI. As will be seen below, it consists of 10 lines under the following metrical scheme:

9898 Iambic.
665 Trochaic.
665 Dactylic.

(I do not quite follow those who classify the last six lines under one head,—Anapæstic.)

The melody is in the 1st Mode, and the harmonies are my own attempt to reproduce its spirit. As in the previous

PSALM LXXXI

To God our strength most com-for - ta - ble; With mer - rie hearts sing
To Ja - cob's God most a - mi - a - ble; Make me - lo - die with

and . . re - joice.
chear - full . . voice.
Go, take up the Psal - mes; The tim-brel with

Shal - mes: Bring forth now, let see, The . . harp full of . .

plea - sure With vi - ole in mea - sure, That well can a - gree.

example, I have tried to show the rhythmic scheme of the melody by the rather clumsy device of altered time-signatures. This makes it look stiff *on paper*, but I may add that I have taught the tune *by ear* to a miscellaneous gathering of people who (unhampered by the *sight* of this device) succumbed to the fine rhythmic sweep of the tune, and picked it up without difficulty.

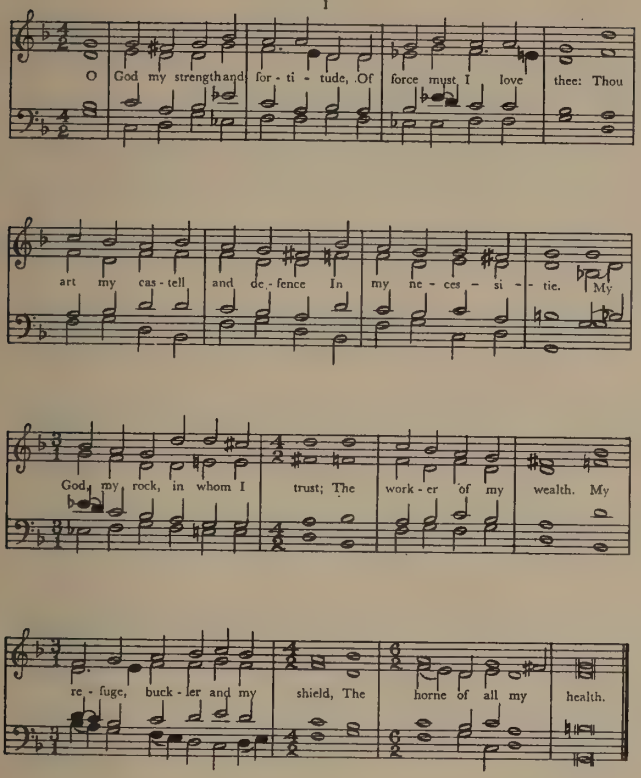
Mr. Livingstone in his dissertation disclaims any intention of deciding whether the Scottish imitation of the French metres from the Genevan Psalter "arose from a desire to manifest affinity with the Church of Calvin, or whether the metres were chosen for their own sake, or from a preference for the tunes pertaining to them." But be the reasons what they may,—theological, poetical, or musical,—there can only be one opinion amongst musicians as to the artistic result.

One final example, this time of a tune which is not in the Genevan Psalter, and which does not occur in any modern hymnbook that I have seen. I choose it for several reasons: (1) because it not only occurs in the body of the Psalter but is also employed as *canto fermo* for one of the Psalms in Reports, (2) because the four-part version exhibits those "consecutive octaves" and other progressions which are "forbidden" by the contrapuntists and yet sound quite effective in performance, (3) because the version "In Reports" bristles with those clashes (between natural and sharpened notes) which are characteristic of the period (Byrd's now well known "Ave Verum" being the most ravishing example); which sound so horrible on the domestic pianoforte, and are so piquantly irresistible when *sung*.

Livingstone assigns the melody to the "Dorian" Mode, and it certainly does touch *LA* pretty frequently. But (speaking under correction) I am inclined to place it in Mode II (Hypodorian) from the persistency with which it perambulates round *FA*. I have, therefore, harmonised the first example of it in that Mode.

PSALM XVIII

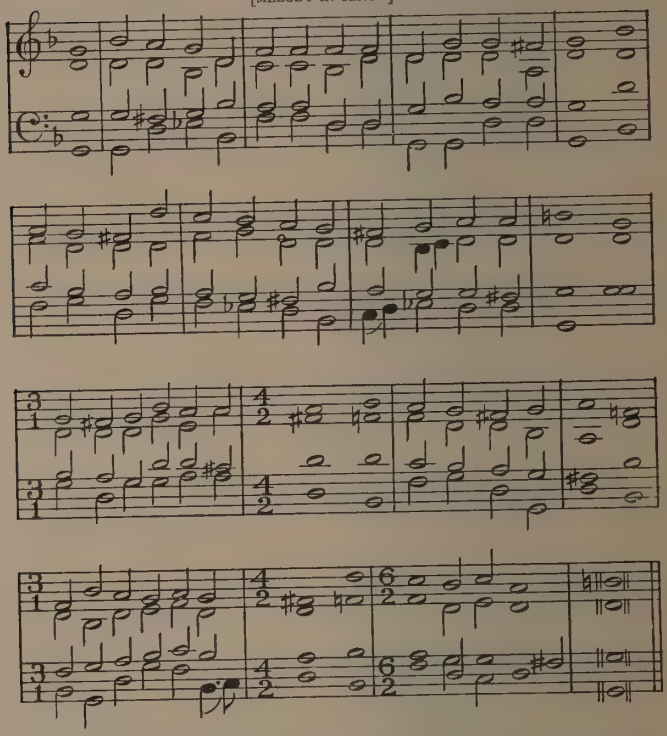
I



II

The same Psalm as it occurs in body of Psalter

[MELODY IN TENOR]



In supplying words to the version "In Reports" I have been guided by the principles of Text-underlaying prevalent in British music of that period. The sharps which occur *on* the stave are in the original text. Those placed *over* the stave are suggested by myself, in accordance with the rules governing "Music Ficta."

III

The same Psalm In Reports

[MELODY IN "CHURCH PART"]

TRIBBLE

O

QUINTUS

O God my strength and for - ti - tude, Of force must I love thee.

CONTRA (8VA LOWER)

O God my strength and for - ti-

CHURCH PART (8VA LOWER)

O God my strength and for - ti - tude, Of force must

BASSUS

O God my strength and for - ti - tude, Of force must

God my strength and for - ti - tude, Of force must I love thee. Thou art my

Thou art my cas - tell and de - fence,

tude, Of - force must I - love thee. Thou art my cas - tell

I love thee: Thou art my cas - tell and de-

I love thee: Thou art my cas - tell and de - fence, In

cas - tell and de - fence, In my ne - ces - si - tie. My

In my ne - ces - si - tie. My

and de - fence, In my ne ces - si - tie. My - God, the Rock

fence, In my ne - ces - - si - tie.

fence, In my ne - ces - si - tie. My God, the Rock in

God, my Rock in whom I trust, The work-er of my wealth,

God, the Rock in - whom I - - trust, The work-er of my wealth, My re - fuge,

- the Rock in whom I trust, The work-er of my wealth,

My God, the Rock in whom I trust, The work-er of my wealth,

whom I trust, The work-er of my wealth, My

My re - fuge, buck - ler, and my shield, The horne

buck - ler and my shield, The horne of

My re - fuge, buck - ler, and my shield, The

My re. - fuge, buck - ler, and my shield, The horne of

re - fuge, buck - ler, and my shield – The horne of

of all my health.

all my – health.

horne of all my health.

all my health.

all my – health.

Modern contrapuntists will call these last two examples crude. (I have chosen them for that reason.) Their counterpoint may lack the grace of Scotland's greatest polyphonist,—Robert Johnson, who flourished *circa* 1550—but when rendered by human voices and not played upon a pianoforte it is anything but unvocal.

The unabashed employment of "forbidden consecutives," and the stark exposure of bare fifths no doubt *looks* crude to academic eyes, but it does not *sound* crude to anyone who is able to think of music in other terms than those of the pianoforte.

After nearly thirty years' daily rehearsal of polyphonic music I can say that the bare fifth *on voices* has a dignity and strength which it mostly loses when the third is added. Real modernists do not need to be told this; they have passed the stage when a common chord without its third was regarded as a freak.

Neither am I impressed by the fact that this Scottish counterpoint is less polished than the English work of the same period. Considering how Scotland had for centuries been torn by internal feuds, the wonder is that she found any time at all to cultivate the arts. Yet in this Psalter of hers, she produced a highly effective art-work, which compares more than favourably with similar work produced in other countries.

Today we are witnessing a growing reaction against the sentimental hymn-tune, and a growing preference for the more virile psalm-tune. I do not suppose that Scottish *congregations* will relinquish the saccharine mid-Victorian hymn-tune any more readily than English ones, but I have sufficient faith in Scottish *intellectuals* to believe that once they are placed in possession of these melodies of their ancestors they will pay them the honour and reverence that is their due.

I think the day is coming when Scotland will return to these noble tunes, and that the future generation will atone (by its appreciation) for the unmerited oblivion to which they have too long been consigned.

ENGLISH AND ITALIAN POLYPHONY

ANALOGIES and comparisons between literature and music are often dangerous, and present many pitfalls for the unwary. But provided the analogies are not pressed too far, and the comparisons do not degenerate into mere academic codification, the study of music in the light of general literature and art is not without its compensations. The history of European music compared with European literature is almost as fruitful in contrasts as in parallels. One form of it—modal Plainsong—so far from following on parallel lines the development of medieval literature, had already reached fruition while European languages were still in a state of flux, and while the literary conflict of the two realms of ideas—Latin and Teutonic—was far from its end. This is naturally explained by the fact that Plainsong—early an adjunct of Church worship—was perfected in the cloister, and soon became the authorised and official form of Church song. It was, therefore, a corporate offering from all nations to the service of the Church, and in that sense was international, or rather supernational. The Latin tongue to which it was set was a finished literary product; music was wedded to a text perfect as to its literary form,—a noble medium for the presentation of the mystic measures of the Liturgy.

The contribution of various nationalities to the store of Plainsong cannot now be discovered, since no composers' names appear, and internal evidence as to their various identities is lacking in a form of music entirely devoted to the expression of a purely corporate and ecclesiastical idea. But as the resources of Plainsong became exhausted and the new art of classic Polyphony slowly took shape, the progress of European music in its rise and fall throughout the different nationalities can be traced with greater certitude. The influence exerted by one nationality upon another is more clearly defined; the overlapping schools of composition stand out with clearness and definiteness;

the debt of this country to that, of that race to another, is easily traced.

In this interplay of the forces of art and letters among the nations, the indebtedness of England to Italy, and Italy to England, is a constant and abiding factor, and where the indebtedness is incurred in one branch of art it is well repaid in another. If the Norman Conquest arrested the normal development of English literature and threw the country back into the condition of Italy before Dante—a welter of dialects—a new literary language was at least established with Chaucer; and just as Italian lyric poetry owed its inspiration to the Troubadours, so was English literature placed under a debt to Italy in the person of Chaucer, who had learned the language of Dante, and caught the secret of Boccaccio. And this literary debt increased with the centuries.

Many debts which cannot be repaid in kind, on the one hand, may be at least adjusted by a corresponding obligation on the other, and if Elizabethan literature owes a certain inspiration to Italy, Italy is under a like obligation to England in the realm of music.

The musical history of both countries is in some respects startlingly similar. Both had a glorious past in the sixteenth century, and both are now equally neglectful of the master-works of that Golden Age. Of this more anon.

As far back as the Plainsong Period, Italian culture readily recognised eminence in any form of art, and this breadth of vision is nowhere more clearly indicated than by the number of British Cantors who were called to Rome and other cities of Italy as instructors. In the post-Plainsong Period when the art of mensurable music was beginning to come into its own, we see the same exodus of Englishmen to Italy, and such historic characters as John Hothby (ca. 1471) (more familiarly known as Ottobi) spending the greater part of their lives there. This generous appreciation of English musicianship is most strikingly shown in the case of John of Dunstable (d. 1453). Dunstable has been called the inventor of

counterpoint, and although the title is obviously an exaggerated one, he at least was the first European to bring form, structure and coherence to the new art of mensurable music. One or two compositions of his are all that are to be found in his native country. It is to Italy that we owe the preservation of the remainder—at Bologna, Modena, and elsewhere. In like manner, Hothby's wonderful treatise "La Caliopea Legale," regarded as lost for centuries, was eventually discovered not in England but in Italy—one copy at Florence, and another at Venice.

That England was then the first musical nation in Europe is a statement usually received with surprise and incredulity by the multitude, and nowhere more so than in England itself. The cause of this strange misreading of history is threefold: firstly our national habit of self-depreciation, secondly our complacent acceptance of the German musical yoke from the time of Handel onwards, and thirdly the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century. Just as the free development of the English poetic drama was brought to a violent end by the Puritans so the free development of classic polyphony was thrown out of gear by the Reformation, with this one difference: while the poetic drama never recovered itself, music—dethroned from its supremacy in the Church—found a new and glorious expression in the Elizabethan madrigal. The vogue of the madrigal was, however, a short one—a bare thirty years or so—and the tide of English music, arrested in full flood, subsided into backwaters where in sheer indifference we have allowed it to stagnate. I do not forget the greatness of Henry Purcell, the solitary outstanding figure from the sixteenth century onwards.

The history of English music in the period immediately succeeding Dunstable is yet one more instance of our other habit of complacency: first achieving something great, and then leaving to others its development, while we contentedly rested on our oars in self-satisfied contemplation. The Franco-Flemish School learnt the

principles of musical construction from the English, but carried them still further by such devices as imitation and canon; they in their turn handing on the torch to Italy. Warmed by southern suns, fostered in the Land of Romance, anything that was crude in the mechanism of northern counterpoint acquired a new polish without losing aught of dignity or strength, until it attained its fullest form of expression in the mighty Palestrina—*Princeps Musicæ*. While this moulding and welding process was going on in Italy a change had come over the face of England. The Wars of the Roses were over, and under the more settled *regime* of the Tudors, the spirit of adventure sought for other and newer outlets than internecine strife. "Merchant Venturers" scoured unknown seas in search of unknown lands; the spirit of literature began to stir and musical art awoke from its long sleep. A generation of composers appeared in England who took up the threads of musical construction at the point where the Flemings had left it. Equals of the Flemings in technique, they excelled them in the daring with which they broke fresh ground and explored hitherto undreamed of fields. Before Palestrina's date (?1529—1594) there were giants in England—Aston, Taverner, Fayrfax, Tye, Tallis, Shepherde, and Whyte—fully worthy of comparison with their Italian contemporaries. By the time Palestrina had reached the summit of his fame (Missa Papæ Marcelli, 1563)—England had produced William Byrd (?1538—1623)—as great in music as was his contemporary Shakespeare in literature. Henceforth the two schools developed side by side until the cataclysm of the Reformation in England and the decline of classical polyphony in Italy after the death of Palestrina. But whereas the master-works of Italian polyphony have been printed and reprinted in modern times, those of England have been allowed to slip into oblivion, buried in libraries and museums; and when they are at length brought to light, the wonder of succeeding generations will be that we as a nation should have meted out such treatment to

our greatest composers, and held so cheaply a great national heritage. If Italy of the present day has sinned in losing touch with her music of the sixteenth century, it is only so far as performance goes; but England has doubly sinned, not merely in forgetting to perform hers, but in neglecting even to print it.

Anything like a critical knowledge of this early English music has hitherto been difficult to obtain. The separate vocal parts are contained in separate part-books: they are written in the obsolete and barless notation of the period (decipherable only by those who have made a special study of the subject), and the process of transcribing them into score in modern notation is a long and laborious one. The present writer is only beginning to form a just estimate of the early English composers after nearly thirty years spent in scoring their compositions. Musical historians have proved no help—all evidence going to show that they have lacked either the leisure, the inclination, or the necessary technical knowledge to score old English music, save in the most superficial and fragmentary manner. If English historians have thus neglected the master-works of English composers, small wonder that other nations have remained ignorant of the wealth of noble music produced by Englishmen in the Polyphonic period.

A second obstacle to a just appraisement of early English Polyphony lies in the wholesale destruction of choir-books at the Reformation. Huge stores of manuscripts, the accumulation of centuries, were used as waste-paper, and the Protestant historian, Bale, throws further light on the extent of the vandalism by stating that the parchments were sent to continental bookbinders "by ships full." From the large amount which even yet remains it is possible to form some idea of how prolific in noble music the Tudor Period really was. Italian polyphonic music having been carefully preserved can be judged as a whole; English music of the same period must be judged by its scattered and often fragmentary remains.

One fact may here be noted. We have seen English musicians of the Middle Ages gravitating to Rome and other centres of Italian culture, but during the Tudor Period they all remained in their own country, save in the case of those who, like Philips and Dering, fled abroad for safety and published their subsequent compositions in Antwerp and elsewhere. This may be partly ascribed to the strongly-stirred national spirit, and the revival of letters and music, though perhaps the strained relations between the Pope and the English King may also have had their effect. English music of the Tudor Period certainly does exhibit strongly pronounced national characteristics, but evidence is not wanting to show that English musicians were acquainted with the work of their continental contemporaries.

We may further note that the purely Italian School of Polyphony was as late in developing as the Tudor School in England. Animuccia (ca. 1550) may be said to be its first great light. Previous to his time nearly all the best composers for the great Roman choirs were foreigners. First the Flemings-Dufay to di Lasso; next the Spaniards —Escobedo, Morales, Guerrero, Ortiz, and the great Vittoria. Whatever differences in individuality and technique their compositions showed, there was a family likeness of style in their treatment of the liturgical text. There is a broad similarity so far as liturgical construction is concerned between the music of every composer—of whatever nationality—which was produced in Italy for the service of the Church.

English ecclesiastical music of the period had this in common with the Italian—it was grave, sober and reverent in spirit, but in the matter of construction it began early to display markedly insular characteristics. These were specially noticeable in the treatment of the Mass. Very few English Polyphonic Masses possessed a *Kyrie*, and from the evidence at hand it seems reasonable to suppose that this was sung in Plainsong. The *Gloria* was invariably set complete without any omission of the

text; but whereas the earlier composers of the Fayrfax period (ca. 1502) were inclined to spin it out in long sections, it later became more closely knit after the manner of Palestrina. The musical treatment of the *Credo* was in striking contrast with contemporary Italian settings. Except in a few well-known instances, considerable portions of the text after "*Sedet ad dexteram Patris*" were omitted; but the conclusion was always "*et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen.*" Composers seem to have exercised their own discretion as to what actual sections of the text they omitted, but it is noteworthy that such omissions always took place within the limits defined above. This seems to indicate not so much an arbitrary choice on the part of the composer, as some well-established local custom. The theory has been advanced that the omitted portions were sung in Plainsong, and that—as in the case of the Magnificats of Palestrina—only the Polyphonic portion was written down, since the Plainsong was sufficiently known by rote. This theory—in spite of its popular acceptance—is only the creation of superficial writers with a sublime disregard for anything so prosaic as evidence. It will not bear examination, for this solitary and sufficient reason: the only Plainsong *Credo* known in England before the Reformation was in the fourth Mode; the Polyphonic Masses were in every known Mode; the performance of a "figured" *Credo* in one Mode with interpolated Plainsong in another is unthinkable.

Excepting in the case of such late composers as Byrd, the *Sanctus* was usually a very long movement, but in construction it approximated very closely to Italian models, as also did the equally lengthy *Benedictus*. It is in the *Agnus Dei* where the difference between English and Italian settings is most strongly marked. In the case of Palestrina the *Agnus Dei* usually consists of two movements: (1) *Agnus Dei . . . miserere nobis*, (2) *Agnus Dei . . . dona nobis pacem*. But the tendency of other continental composers was to confine the *Agnus Dei* to one movement, in which the concluding words *miserere nobis*

or *dona nobis pacem* could be interchanged without affecting the music. A possible explanation of the lengthy *Agnus Dei* settings of great composers such as Palestrina and Vittoria, and the short settings of such lesser lights as Gabrieli, Croce, Vecchi, Lotti, etc., is that the former were written with a view to pontifical functions with their long-drawn-out ceremonial, and the latter for use at an ordinary High Mass celebrated by a priest. English composers almost invariably set the *Agnus Dei* in three long movements, and in the case of Christopher Tye's *Missa "Euge Bone"* for six voices, the first petition of the *Agnus Dei* is set no less than three times, thus making four movements in all.

English Mass music of the period differs considerably from the Italian in the manner of its notation. Italian music, up to the time of Palestrina, tended towards greater notational simplicity. The early English composers (Fayrfax, Taverner, Tye, Merbecke, Norman, Alwoode, and sometimes Tallis) on the other hand availed themselves of every "learned" device in the setting out of their vocal parts. Every complexity of "Modus," "Tempus" and "Prolatio," of "Sesquialtera" and "Sesquiquarta" and other forms of "Proportio" was freely resorted to. This does not mean, however, that they neglected such artistic devices as imitation and canon so freely employed by their Italian contemporaries. Students of Palestrina will have noticed that his settings of the *Gloria* and *Credo* divide themselves roughly into two classes; the first extended, and full of fugal and canonic imitation; the second short, with full chords in what would now be called "block harmony." Examples of "block harmony" settings of any portion of the Mass are extremely rare in the work of English composers. The counterpoint is almost invariably free and flowing and brevity of treatment is seldom aimed at.

Widely different as is the style of Italian and English polyphonists of the sixteenth century, their music has one tremendous factor in common. It reached its culminating

point during the full tide of the Renaissance, but the striking fact remains that it was in no sense a product of the Renaissance. When the New Learning flooded Europe, its influence was felt in every department of art and literature save this one. The New Learning meant a return to classical ideals, and with it the medieval period came to an end. But classical Polyphony harked back to no Greek models; it was the logical outcome and development of purely medieval ideals. Founded on the Plainsong, modal in its tonality, mystical and religious in its character, it preserved the medieval atmosphere in spite of the modernity of its technique. What spirit of adventure it possessed was in the direction of technique rather than ethics. To understand it we must understand the part which religion played in the Middle Ages, when in spite of conflict and strife "all men were religious." This religion was pious, not pietistic. It accepted the facts of life and death, spiritual authority and obedience and all that they implied, as naturally and unquestioningly as it accepted the sun from heaven and the breeze from the sea. Religion was not then a self-conscious choice and acceptance of one set of formulas from among a number of others. Religion was not a "school of thought"; religion was life—life lived in its minutest details in conformity with a higher will: a lofty optimism resting content that God in His Heaven was very near, and all well with a universe that only existed to fulfil His word.

This is the spirit that breathes through the whole work of Palestrina, Anerio and Vittoria; of Whyte, Tallis and Byrd. There is a world of difference between the crystal-clear counterpoint of Animuccia—glittering like the hoar frost of an autumn morning—and the eager burning beauty of Taverner; between the grave sweetness of Tallis and the rich and ringing periods of Anerio; between the noble mysticism of Byrd and the divine ecstasy of Palestrina. But the spirit is the same. Both schools spoke with certainty and power, both were

touched with the rich glow of imagination, though perhaps the Italian was characterised by a more conscious sense of dignity, and the English by the free-voyaging intellect of the age, in which "to travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive." In Palestrina and Byrd Italy and England share the glory of bringing to a close a great period, a fruitful period, a period of contemplative detachment, in restful contrast with the storm and stress of to-day.

THE TROUBADOUR IN FACT AND FICTION

REPEATEDLY one has to note how English musical text-books have been hopelessly behind the times, for the obvious reason that the first text-book writer echoed Burney and Hawkins, and the rest echoed each other with pathetic fidelity. Great movements in music have arisen and reached fruition; great composers have flourished; profound changes have taken place in style and technique; but it is only long after such things have become the commonplace of the man in the street that they have struggled in tentative fashion into our text-books.

More especially has this been the case in matters of research. The Plainsong movement—initiated by the monks of Solesmes, who went back to original MSS. and restored them in their pristine purity—which has exercised so wide an influence on European music, is now something over fifty years old. Multitudes of musical histories and text-books have been published in this country during that period, but—unless we go to foreign authors—we know little more of the subject than we did in our youth.

Polyphony has fared somewhat better, but only when it was of foreign origin. It is quite true to say that (with the exception of the madrigalists) we know next to nothing about the English composers who made our country great in music in Tudor times. Only recently I received from the publishers a new historical text-book, which says: "John Taverner seems to belong to the Fayrfax school rather than the Tye and Tallis; his style looks back rather than forward." Here we have in this year of grace the same old bracketing of two strikingly dissimilar composers which will be found in every text-book. I, myself—in a book which I wrote twenty-four years ago, before I had scored the works of Fayrfax

and Taverner—was guilty of this same absurd statement about them, for no other reason than that certain of my musical pastors and masters (whom I believed had practical acquaintance with the two composers in question) had told me so. One hesitated in those days to question what one looked upon as the considered opinion of recognised authorities. Later years brought with them a frank distrust of any "authorities" whose statements one had not checked by personal research.

But for sheer wild and reckless (not to say ignorant) misrepresentation, the text-book treatment of the Troubadours stands unique and unrivalled. We are still—in England—in that smugly complacent state of outer darkness which obtained when William Haynes Bailey of pious memory chanted about a gay Troubadour who

. . . "touched his *guitar* (*sic*)
As he was hastening home from the war."

The "best-seller" amongst musical text-books (faithfully copied by all others) used to tell how the music of the medieval Church was a hard, rigid, mechanical thing, against which the free musician of the world revolted; that, in the cloister, music groaned under the tyranny of ecclesiastical rules, but that, outside, "the Troubadour, casting theories to the winds, sang his 'wood-notes wild,' unfettered by the chains of ecclesiastical tyranny."

That sort of writing was all very well forty years ago. But the researches of Pierre Aubry, the Frenchman, and Dr. J. B. Beck, the German, now deprive it of any shadow of excuse. And yet, so slowly does foreign musical research percolate through into this country, that the subject is almost a sealed book even to otherwise enlightened English musicians. It seems time we tried to bring ourselves into line with the latest research concerning a movement which exercised so profound an influence on both poetry and music.

In the most popular of Beck's books, he humorously alludes to the then prevailing ideas. "The name of Troubadour evokes in the popular mind the image of a

young, romantic singer, with pale face and languishing gaze, holding in his delicate hands the traditional lute or lyre. The statue of the 'Florentine Singer,' with its mincing affectation, well embodies this legendary type; but it gives us an idea of the Troubadours and Trouvères of the Middle Ages which is far from exact."

The extraordinary part of the whole affair is that men of letters have treated exhaustively Troubadour poetry, but have completely ignored the music. No doubt, this is partly due to the contempt in which men of letters were wont to hold music and musicians, but it is equally clear that the obsolete notation of the Troubadour songs (unintelligible even to modern musicians) was another factor. These two explanations may provide an excuse for neglect of the music, but they certainly do not furnish a justification. Troubadour verses were composed for singing, and *not in any circumstances* for recitation. The famous Troubadour—Folquet, of Marseilles (the only member of the profession honoured by Dante with a place in his Paradise), writes: "A verse without music is a mill without water." Words and music were always inseparable. Together they formed a complete whole; and even in these days a knowledge of both is indispensable to a complete knowledge of either, since the structure of one is a guide to the structure of the other. Aubry is right in saying that historians of Troubadour literature must always leave a part of their task undone if they forget Folquet's aphorism above quoted. Few literatures have exercised so profound an influence on the literary history of other peoples as has the poetry of the Troubadours of Provence, and the Trouvères of Northern France. A moment's reflection will sufficiently demonstrate that the music to which this poetry was always allied cannot be a negligible quantity. But a negligible quantity it did, nevertheless, remain until Aubry and Beck reconstructed and revived it for us.

Troubadour art reached its highest point in the last half of the twelfth century and the first half of the

thirteenth. It was the shoot from which all European lyrical poetry may be said to have sprung. Its influence on European music was no less marked, but in rather different ways. On the one hand it opened up new forms; but, on the other, the application of the principles of the Rhythmic Modes (to be noted later), so vital to Troubadour song, proved a drag on the wheels when applied later to classical polyphony.

It is hardly necessary to remind readers that Troubadour songs were Provencal in origin. Most other forms of art can be traced from crude beginnings to ultimate perfection. But the remarkable thing about these Provencal Troubadour songs is that the earliest records exhibit them as an already perfected form of art. As Beck says: "The sudden appearance of a style fairly developed in point of form, such as is revealed by the first Troubadour, is a phenomenon which has always puzzled scholars." There is not an author (great or small) on this subject who has not tried to explain this prodigy. Certain philologists have supposed that the poetry of the Troubadours was of popular origin (just as our textbooks have done). "But it is difficult to admit that the couplets of the first songs in Provencal literature, the technique of which is so perfect, could have directly succeeded to the humble song of the people. The popular productions, where it is a question of music or words, assuredly do not lack grace, but their technique is very insignificant." Beck goes on to contrast the simple and little-varied ideas of folk-verse and folk-music with the highly-polished and much-varied wealth of ideas in Troubadour productions. He establishes (conclusively, I think) that the one could not have been the outgrowth of the other, and proceeds (with equal logic) to say: "The origin of the poetry of the Troubadours must remain a mystery so long as only the poetical text of the songs is studied. From a literary point of view, the work of the Troubadours is a unique thing. Learned as philology may be, it will search in vain in the vast treasure

of ancient literary works for songs possessing, in however small a measure, the characteristic features of the poetry of the Troubadours. Future study of this subject will have to be confined, not to the history of literature, but to the history of music; indeed music not only forms an integral part of the work of the Troubadours, but it even determines—and that in a fairly large measure—the poetical forms of the songs."

If we approach the subject from this angle, we shall soon find how wildly wrong are the text-books which tell us that the earliest Troubadour music was a revolt against ecclesiastical formalism, and a movement towards greater rhythmic and melodic freedom. Secular composers certainly did strike out on new lines, which were quite different in style from that of the church composers. But the fact has apparently been forgotten that in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the Plainsong of the Church had not yet become a dead language, conserved by custom and tradition, and that its chief characteristic was exceptional freedom of both rhythm and melody. On the other hand, the first Troubadour melodies—fitted to metrical lines, instead of to the Latin prose of the Church—exhibited more rhythmic and melodic rigidity than did the Plainsong,—just the exact opposite of what the text-books tell us. In fact, Troubadour music never quite escaped this slavery of rhythm to metre. Another factor we must take into account—if we are to get any real insight into the beauty of Troubadour music—is that it was not (as the text-books say) a spontaneous and unsophisticated outburst in song, but an extremely technical, rigidly calculated, and highly artificial product. This is not to say that it loses anything by comparison with the greater freedom of folk-music, any more than "Court dances" lose any of their beauty by comparison with folk-dances. The two are quite distinct—the one sophisticated and the other unsophisticated, but each artistic in its own way.

The most persistent popular fiction regarding Troubadour

music is that it marked a definite break-away from church style in the matter of tonality—that, in fact, it thus approximated more to modern music than to Plainsong. The opposite is the case. The tonality of the Modes (miscalled "ecclesiastical") was—in medieval Europe—common alike to Church song, Folk-song, and Troubadour song.

The further fiction that church music was stiff and cramped, and that Troubadour music was a bold bid for freedom, is easily disposed of. It is generally conceded to-day that Plainsong rhythms are at least free and untrammelled. The Troubadour insistence on the melodic *rhythm* coinciding with the poetic *metre*, did not make for freedom, but the reverse.

As I have already stated there is a wide gulf between Troubadour songs and the popular songs of the people. This is not to say that Troubadour songs are not in popular forms. In the Poitou district, which was a sort of border-line between the French and Provencal languages, the countryfolk sang songs in honour of spring, pastorals and dawn-songs. The pastoral was usually a dialogue between a knight and a shepherdess (in the same style as our own "Where are you going to, my pretty maid?"). The dawn-song, or *alba*, represented those sung by a friend (of the lovers) who kept watch by their meeting-place to warn the absorbed couple of the approach of dawn or any other danger. The populace also sang *balatas*, or dance songs. So here we do find unsophisticated types containing the germ of the more elaborate Troubadour forms. But that the Troubadour songs were in any way of popular origin is negatived by the very name. *Trobador* is the oblique case of the nominative *Trobaire*, a substantive form of the verb *trobar*,—modern French *trouver*. The name Trouvère, given to the singers of Northern France, is a nominative form. The verb *trobar* is supposed to be derived from the low Latin *tropus*—a tune or air; hence the primitive meaning of *Trobador* is "composer" or "inventor," in the first

instance, of new melodies. But this term "inventor" is not of such wide application as the *vates* of the Romans and the ποιητής of the Greeks.* The former was an inspired bard and the latter a creative poet. The "invention" of the Troubadour, on the other hand, was more in the nature of skilful variations on a given theme than inspired or creative power. The songs of the Troubadour, moreover, were essentially aristocratic, appealing to Courts and nobles. For the middle classes they had little appeal, and for the populace none at all. They were essentially products of the age of chivalry, and only flourished in a feudal environment. The art was pursued by kings, princes, and nobles, who, at the same time were willing patrons of any Troubadour who had risen from the lower classes. In fact, although the profession of a Troubadour was mainly filled by the aristocracy, it was democratic in this sense, that the humblest origin was no bar to the recognition of a singer of talent, such, for example, as Bernart de Ventadour, who was the son of a stoker in the Castle of Ventadour; Perdigon was the son of a fisherman.

Even monks and churchmen, such as the Monk of Ventadour, and Peire Cardenal, were to be found in the ranks, as well as women, of whom Beatrice, the Countess of Die, was the most famous.

Sometimes a Troubadour would be established more or less permanently as a Court poet under a patron lord, but these cases were few. More usually they led a wandering life from Court to Court. The spirit of adventure was the ruling passion of the time, and the life of a Troubadour administered to this passion in no small degree.

The themes of the Troubadours were of infinite variety. The chief, of course, was love; but all the social and political questions of the age were treated of as well. The Troubadours satirised religious and political opponents,

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**See H. J. Chaytor—"The Troubadours."*

sang laments on the death of famous patrons, and even preached crusades. Aubry says that an exhaustive classification of the songs is as thankless a task as the classification of butterflies. So we need not do more here than place them under their main headings. The style may be roughly placed in two classes,—the objective, where the heroes of the songs occupy the principal place, and the subjective, where the poet speaks for himself. Some historians have attempted a geographical standard for the classification of the lyrical styles. This we may also pass over. Perhaps the most intelligible division is Aubry's—(*a*) La Chanson a Personages; (*b*) La Poesie Courtoise; (*c*) Religious Songs. Class A was divided into (1) *Chansons d'histoire* (ballads, or songs with a tale or legend). These are, without doubt, the earliest specimens of lyrical work preserved in the manuscripts. They are all written in the *langue d'oil* (the language of Northern France) and are anonymous: the metre is that of the *chanson de geste* (ballad of romance and chivalry) rather than of a true lyrical verse, and rhyme has not yet displaced the primitive assonance. The subject is an anecdote or a little love drama, in which intensity of effect is gained rather from simplicity of means than from conscious or subtle skill.

The following example is taken from Aveling's translation of Aubry's Trouvères and Troubadours:

I.

Fair Yolanz sat in her chamber,
Weaving a robe of fine silk;
She wished to send it to her lover.
Sighing, she sang this song:
"God, so sweet is the name of love,
I never thought to feel its pains."

II.

"Dear, sweet friend, I fain would send you
A robe, out of very great friendship;

By heaven, I pray you, have pity upon me."
She could not stand, she sank to the ground.
"God, so sweet," etc.

III.

At these words, and at this speech,
Her true love entered the house;
She saw him, her head (lit. chin) drooped,
She could not speak, nor said him yea or nay.
"God, so sweet," etc.

IV.

Her true love took her in his arms,
They sat alone upon a fair couch.
Fair Yolanz kissed him passionately;
. . . . .
"God, so sweet," etc.

(2) *Les Chansons Dramatiques* are very characteristic of the period. The subject is the familiar man and wife and *tertium quid*. Needless to say, these *chansons dramatiques* are no school of morality. Popular songs of all ages on ill-assorted marriages have usually been satirical, ridiculing husband, wife, and all concerned; but, as Aubry points out, "the medieval composition is avowedly cynical and immoral, and the husband is made a laughing-stock simply because he is the husband. So we can understand the candour of the bride who shamelessly cries: 'Honis soit maris ki dure plus d'un mois.'" The following song (from the same source as before) will show the nature of the *chanson dramatique*:

I.

Why does my husband beat me?
Unhappy one
I have done him no harm,
Nor have I spoken ill of him,
Except to embrace my lover
In secret.
Why does my husband beat me?
Unhappy one.

II.

If he does not let me rest
And lead a happy life,
I shall make a complaint of him,
For certain.
Why does my husband beat me?
Unhappy one.

III.

Now I know what to do
And how to avenge myself;
I shall find consolation
With my lover.
Why does my husband beat me?
Unhappy one.

(3) *Les Chansons de Danse.* In this connexion Aubry says that up to within a few years of his time our knowledge of dancing in the Middle Ages was almost nil. He ascribes this ignorance partly to "the high-priests of scholarship and research, who could not lower themselves to the study of dances, dancing-girls and their art."

These chansons, without doubt, were the sophisticated forms of the unsophisticated customs of the people in which the dancing was accompanied by instruments. As represented by the Troubadours, they contain the three elements—music, poetry, and dancing. They introduced a protagonist, or principal singer and a chorus. The *balade* and the *rondeau* were specially popular variations of this type. The following (translation) is typical:

I.

When the fine weather returns, (Eya) to resume her joyousness (Eya) and to annoy the jealous, (Eya) the Queen wishes to make a show of being in love. Chorus: Fly away, far away, ye jealous, leave us, leave us to dance by ourselves, by ourselves.

II.

She has proclaimed far and wide that, from here to the sea, there shall be neither maid nor youth but must dance in the joyous dance. Fly away, etc.

III.

But the King arrives from another land, to disturb the dance, for he is in dread lest one should take away from the Queen of April. Fly away, etc.

(4) *Reverdies* (Spring Songs). This was the least important of the minor lyric forms. It properly belongs to May Day festivities, but as treated by the Trouvères the *reverdie* becomes a pastoral, without the shepherdess and rustic characters. Only the framework remains. The rural framework is idealised, and the fairy setting is intended to produce the illusion of Spring, on which the poet expands his fancy. We are usually transported to a forest glade where the poet dreams his dreams of sunlit blossoms that shelter the birds of the air, and he challenges them to a contest of song, of which the following is a typical example:

I. Do you wish me to sing you a charming love-song? No villein made it, but a cavalier, in the arms of his mistress beneath an olive-tree.

II. She wore a cinglet of fine linen, cloak of white ermine and silken tunic, hose of golden net, and shoes of May blossoms, entwined around her feet.

III. She wore a girdle of leaves made green by the rain; it was fastened with gold. She was love's almoner, all garlanded with flowers; she was love's guerdon.

. . . . . .

V. She went her way along the glade: cavaliers met her and gave her fair greeting.

"Lady fair, where were you born?"

"I am the pride of France, of most noble lineage."

VI. "The nightingale that sings on the bough of the farthest thicket is my father; the siren that sings by the farthest shore of the salt sea is my mother."

(5) *The Pastourelles.* The word is not derived from *pastoralia* (songs about rustic matters), but from *pastorella*, *i.e.*, song of a shepherdess. Both Troubadours and Trouvères used this form. Here the woman no longer sings in her apartments but in the open air, in the meadows by the bank of a stream, or in the woods. M. Jeanroy describes the usual form of the pastoral: "A knight—none other than the poet—roams the country at daybreak, a prey to the cares or miseries of love. In a meadow, or on the road, he meets a young shepherdess wreathing a chaplet or singing a song. Enchanted by her beauty, he dismounts and woos her more or less discreetly. So far, the poems are all alike; no poet ever indulges in any variant of the time-honoured preamble, but at this point the modifications come in. Often—this is the most common form—the shepherdess requires persistent coaxing; she declines to accept as genuine a passion so suddenly conceived and declared; excusing herself on the score of the inferiority of her condition and the simplicity of her dress, she sends her suitor back to the ladies of his own class, or alleges the proximity of father or lover working in the field hard by. But the gallant knight has an answer for every excuse, violently protesting his love, sudden indeed, but ardent nevertheless; he launches out into enthusiastic praises of the girl's beauty, vows himself indignant that she should vegetate thus, swearing that she is fit for a palace, and the king's son would be proud to call her his. He proposes to carry her off, that she may adorn his castle and revel in his wealth.

'If she refuses, he is willing to handle the crook, so that she may be nearer.'

Sometimes these specious promises are unnecessary, and the sight of a jewel, an ermine cloak, a scarlet gown, or a golden ring suffices to soften the capricious beauty's

heart. If she is still obstinate, the knight does not scruple to use force where persuasion has failed. Then, of course, he forgets all his promises, remounts his charger, and goes on his way unabashed. Matters do not always run so smoothly; sometimes the lady screams for help. Her father, brother, or lover rushes out of a convenient thicket and valiantly protects her honour. When the knight finds himself confronted by strong opposition, he soon makes up his mind. If he make resistance, he is sometimes worsted, and does not escape without a buffet or two, as he himself acknowledges with excellent grace."

(6) *Chansons d'Aube*, *Albas* (Dawn-Songs, Serenades). The *alba* of Provencal poets and the *aube* of the Troubadours is not the *aubade* which dates no further back than the fifteenth century. This form is one of the most artistically beautiful and morally shameless in the Troubadour repertoire. As the lady who was wooed by the knight was invariably the lawful wife of somebody else, the dangers attending the lovers' meetings were so great that night time was always chosen for them, and some faithful friend (usually of the lady) was always at hand to warn them of the dawn so that the lover might vanish before the shades of night had fled. Ever since the time of Romeo (who swore the lark was a nightingale) lovers have always been incredulous of the approach of dawn. The usefulness of a watcher (to "rub it in" to these incredulous ones) is, therefore, obvious. Of course, the watcher was sometimes obliged to function before the dawn in the event of the approach of a husband or spying prowlers. Here is one example of the dawn-song:

I.

The Lover's Companion (speaking to Watcher) :

Watcher of the tower,
Look around the walls,
And God befriend you;

For now at rest
Are lady and lord,
  And the robber is on the prowl.

The Watcher (sounding his horn and going his rounds):

Hu and hu and hu
  I saw him
There under the hazel-thicket.
Hu and hu and hu
I should rejoice to kill him.

II.

The Companion (to the Watcher):

A sweet song of love,
  Of Blancheur,
Friend, I would sing to you,
  Were it not for fear
  Of the traitor
  Whom I suspect.

The Watcher:

Hu and hu and hu
  I saw him
There under the hazel-thicket,
Hu and hu and hu
I should rejoice to kill him.

III.

The Companion:

Friend, I am wrong,
For at this juncture
I would gladly sleep.
Let them have no fear,
Let him take his ease
Who wants to go his way.

The Watcher:

Hu and hu and hu
Let there be silence,
Friend, at this moment.
Hu and hu. I knew well
That we should find joy in this.

IV.

The Companion:

They are not many,
  The robbers.
There is but one that I see
Who crouches amid the flowers,
  In company
With her I dare not name.

The Watcher:

Hu and hu and hu
Now let there be silence,
Friend, at this juncture,
Hu and hu. I knew well
That we should find joy in this.

V.

The Companion (to the lovers):

Courtly lovers,
Who are at rest
Within the quiet chamber,
  Have no fear,
For till daylight come
You can enjoy your happiness.

The Watcher:

Hu and hu and hu
  Let there be silence,
Friend, at this moment.
Hu and hu. I knew well
That we should find joy in this.

VI.

The Lover:

Watcher of the tower,
  Behold my return
From the place whence I heard you.
Of love and lady,
In this venture
I have taken that which I like best.

The Watcher:

Hu and hu

The Lover:

I have tarried a little
In the bower of joy.

The Watcher:

Hu and hu

The Lover:

Too much it irked me,
This dawn that assailed me.

VII.

The Lover:

Saving the honour
  Of the Creator,
I would He always made
  Night of day;
  Then never more
Should I have pain or heaviness.

The Watcher:

Hu and hu

The Lover:

Truly have I seen
The quintessence of beauty—

The Watcher:

Hu and hu

The Lover:

That is certain.
Watcher, God keep thee.

This brief consideration of Troubadour lyrics must be followed by an equally brief one on the subject of the music. The difficulty of deciphering it from the earliest MSS. lies in the fact that the earliest Troubadour melodies were written in the neumatic notation with which Plainsong has familiarised us. The measured notation of Franco was not in full use until the middle of the thirteenth century. The earliest notation (owing its origin to the accents of Greek writing) only indicated the direction of the melodic contour, without determining the real intervals. But, on the whole, the intervals in Troubadour music are easily decipherable, as the notes are written on a stave. The difficult point is the rhythm. But here the words are a help in determining the relative length of the notes.

The unravelling of rhythmic complexities by Aubry and Beck enables us to take for granted certain principles on which the Troubadours worked:

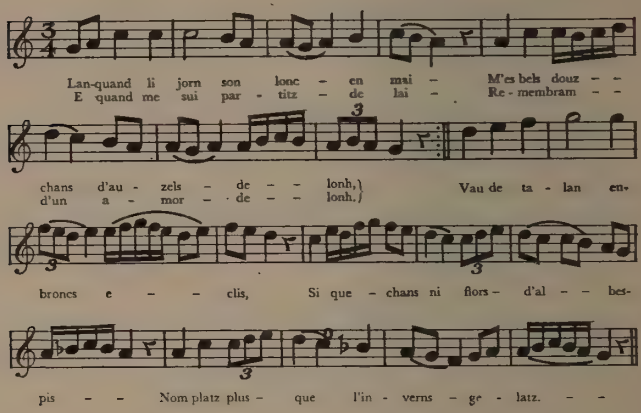
(1) Correlation between the Tonic accents of words and the strong beats of the music.

(2) Augmentation of duration, marking the coincidence of an accented syllable on a weak beat, and an unaccented one on a strong beat.

(3) The absolute impossibility of placing the rhyme otherwise than on a strong beat.

(4) Regularity of the adopted rhythm, in which (in the great majority of cases) the movement adopted for the first bar persists through the whole phrase and even through the whole song.

It may be interesting to give here a somewhat famous song, which many authorities consider to have given birth to the legend concerning the love of Jaufre for the Countess of Tripoli, whom he had never seen.



Here the repetition of the first two melodic phrases will be noticed to correspond with the strophic structure of the poetic text, achieving thereby a certain definiteness of form. This correlation was not always found, but its effectiveness cannot be questioned.

Concerning the song, Beck writes as follows: "Rien ne caractérise mieux l'élévation d'esprit que suppose l'amour courtois, que la question soulevée par ces vers d'une beauté si singulière. S'adressent-ils à une mortelle? Ne sont-ils pas plutôt une hymne pieuse en l'honneur de la Vierge? C'est ce que suppose un fin connaisseur de la poésie des troubadours, M. C. Appel, et l'enquête musicale nous engage à nous rallier à son opinion. Cet exemple montre, en même temps, combien la lyrique des troubadours est peu éloignée de la poésie hymnique de l'Église, et combien il est indispensable, pour l'histoire de la

littérature provençale elle-même,d'acquérir une connaissance plus approfondie de la lyrique savante d'inspiration pieuse du moyen âge."*

The lyrics may be classified under the headings of the Rhythmic Modes which they followed. These modes were as follows. N.B.—In the music the notes used were the *Longa* (a square, black note with a tail on the right) and the *Brevis* (a square, black note without a tail), corresponding respectively with the prosody marks — ◡ :

Mode I, in which the foot was a *Longa* followed by *Brevis*—in other words Trochaic rhythm.

Mode II, in which the foot was a *Brevis*, followed by a *Longa*—in other words Iambic rhythm.

Mode III, in which the foot was a *Longa*, followed by *two Breves*—in other words Dactylic rhythm.

Mode IV, in which the foot was *two Breves*, followed by a *Longa*—in other words Anapæstic rhythm.

Mode V, in which the notes were all *Longæ*. (Rules concerning this are vague.)

Mode VI is mentioned by theorists, but I have not yet come across an example of its practice. The notes —either breves, or breves and semi-breves—belong properly to a later period.

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*"*Nothing more clearly depicts that happiness with which a deep and chivalrous love illumines the heart, than the questions raised by these singularly beautiful lines. Are they addressed to a mortal? Or are they not rather a hymn in honour of the Blessed Virgin? M. C. Appel, a keen connoisseur of Troubadour poetry, thinks the latter to be the case, and, after much careful enquiry on the subject, we are inclined to agree with him. At the same time this example shows the strong bond between the music of the Troubadour and that of the Church, and how essential it was for the history of Provencal literature to acquire a profound knowledge of the graceful, devotionally inspired Lyric of the Middle Ages.*"

It will, therefore, be seen that since a definite Rhythmic Mode persisted through an entire composition, and that both words and music had to conform to this mode, Troubadour musical rhythm laboured under considerable restrictions, and was just as pedantic and academic in its structure as were the words. Troubadour melodies, of course, are beautiful in their own way, but that way was not the "free and unfettered" one which the text-book writer's imagination has conjured up. It was the church music of the period (Plainsong) which was "free and unfettered," and fluid in its rhythm, and the Troubadour music which was artificial and formal, and more or less academic.

To the student, the study of Troubadour forms, and their development, is almost as fascinating as a romance, but it would prove of little interest to the general reader unless he is familiar with European notation from the earliest times. Therefore, these pages are obviously the wrong place for it.

This short survey of the Troubadours must necessarily be sketchy and incomplete, since (unlike the rest of this book) it is frankly a compilation, designed primarily to direct the music student to the only work on Troubadour music (Aubry's) which has found an English translator, and secondarily to indicate the nature of the information to be obtained from the French publications of both Aubry and Beck, and from *Die Melodien der Troubadours* of the latter. It will have served its purpose if it has done anything to break down the absurd text-book legends which have gathered round the subject. Aubry's writing is the more picturesque in style perhaps, and he really does take us back to the days of chivalry and the ages of romance.

JOHN MERBECKE

(1523(?)–1585)

THE commonest phenomena in life are (*a*) our proneness to take things for granted—to repeat catchwords and shibboleths without thought or reflection, and (*b*) our blank ignorance of things which we have grown up to regard as most intimate and familiar. Certain names in literature (Shakespeare, for instance) or in music (say Tallis and Byrd) are so constantly on our lips that they have become what we term "Household Words." But it does not always follow that we are as familiar with the works of such authors as we are with their names. Tallis and Byrd are known to us by only a few of their works, and those not necessarily their best. Merbecke, too, has suffered through becoming a "Household Word"; he has shared the fate of Tallis, Whyte, and Byrd, in being known only by his least distinguished work. No satisfactory biography of him has as yet been compiled. Beyond a short extract in Burney's "History of Music," and a carol, given in Hawkins's "History of Music," and republished by the Walter Scott Co., none of his part-music has seen the light of print; and any critical examination of him as a composer of polyphonic music has not been attempted. A more intimate acquaintance with an unjustly neglected composer is necessary if we would arrive at some critical understanding of his music, and see it in clearer perspective.

The date of the birth of John Merbecke, or Merbeck, or Marbeck, is not at all certain. Burney gives it as 1523. On this assumption Merbecke would have reached sixty-two (a highly-probable age) at the time of his death. It may help us in the examination of his music if we compare his date with that of contemporary musicians who may have influenced him in the exercise of his art. Taking Burney's date as correct (for argument's sake), Merbecke was born in the fourteenth year of Henry VIIIth's reign,

twenty-three years after Tye's supposed date, two years after Taverner had been appointed to Christ Church Cathedral from Boston, seven years before Whyte's supposed date, and twenty years before William Byrd was born. This would make him a contemporary of Tallis during the latter's most vigorous period.

Again, assuming Burney's date to be correct, Merbecke would be only eighteen when appointed organist at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, in 1541. For purposes of reference I append the chief dates in his life in chronological order. Inquiries at Windsor have not resulted in any further information, nor is it possible now to ascertain the exact dates of his polyphonic compositions.

Henry VIII reigning

1543 (aged 20)	Merbecke arrested for heresy.
1544 (aged 21)	Tried for heresy, July 26th.

Edward VI reigning.

1549 (aged 26)	Graduated Mus. Doc. at Oxford (according to Burney).
1549 (aged 26)	First Prayer Book of Edward VI issued.
1550 (aged 27)	Published "The Book of Common Praier Noted."

No further details concerning him are forthcoming during the reign of Mary. In spite of his Protestant opinions, he was left unmolested and escaped the Marian persecution, no doubt through the powerful friends he possessed. The remainder of the dates in his life all come within the reign of Elizabeth, who outlived him by eighteen years.

1565 (aged 42)	Merbecke still at Windsor.
1574 (aged 51)	Published "Lives of Holy Saincts" (the first of his prose works).

His other books and pamphlets were published in the following order:

1579 (aged 56)	"The Holie Historie of King Dauid."
1581 (aged 58)	"A ripping up of the Pope's Fardel."
1581 (aged 58)	"A booke of Notes and Commonplaces."

1582 (aged 59) "Examples drawn out of Holy Scriptures."
1584 (aged 61) "A dialogue between youth and old age."
1585 (aged 62) Presumed date of his death.

None of these works would appear to have been reprinted, save "The Booke of Common Praier Noted":

Original publication, 1580.
Facsimile reprint by Whittingham, for Pickering, 1844.
Reprint edited by Rimbault, 1845.
Reprint in Vol. II of Jebb's "Choral Responses and Litanies," 1857.

It will be thus seen that we have no record of his having composed music after the age of twenty-seven. The last eleven years of his life saw the publication of his books and pamphlets, but the preparation of these must have occupied the greater part of his life. His "A Booke of Notes and Commonplaces" reaches the phenomenal total of 2,030 pages.

I will first deal with his "Book of Common Praier Noted"; and if I do so at some length it is not merely on account of its historical importance, but because of the amount of loose writing about it which goes on, and always has gone on, in the religious and musical press. I am not concerned with the verbal text, excepting in so far as it illustrates musical points. The theological side of the book is not one which comes within the scope of this essay. The complete text of the first Prayer Book of Edward VI (to which Merbecke's music was written) can be bought for a shilling, and those who wish to know in what respects it differs from the "Book of Common Prayer" now in use can compare the two books for themselves. No complete modern edition of Merbecke's "Booke of Common Praier" later than that of Jebb (1857) is in existence. The "Oxford Movement" brought again into notice that portion of it used "At the Communion," and the publication of "The Cathedral Prayer Book" made its use more or less general. Although there are now on the

market many editions of the Communion Service—good, bad and indifferent—none of them are in exact accordance with the original. This is partly inevitable, since Merbecke's music was written for the first Prayer Book of Edward VI, which differs considerably from the present "Book of Common Prayer." But granting all this, modern editors still have much to answer for. The prominence given to Merbecke's setting of the "Communion Service" would seem to have diverted attention from the music which he provided for the other portions of the "Book of Common Prayer," and I have found on all hands either complete ignorance or very hazy ideas of the nature of his setting. After a short preface (with which I shall deal later), we have "The Order of Mattins" as follows:

1. "Oure father" sung by "The Quere wyth the Priest."
2. Priest: "O lorde open thou my lippes."
   Auns. "And my mouth shall shew forth thy praise."
   Priest. "O God make spede to saue me."
   Auns. "O lorde make hast to helpe me."
   "Glory be to the father, and to the Sonne and to the holy ghost. As it was in the beginnyng, is now and euer shalbe, world wyth out end. Amen."
   "Prayse ye the lorde."
   (The "Oure father" and succeeding Versicle and Response are in monotone; from "O God make spede" onwards both the musical noting and the verbal form of the "Deus in adjutorium" follow the Latin Matins.)
4. "Venite exultemus" set to the VIIIth Tone; first ending.
5. Psalms "as appointed" (no music given).
6. First Lesson.
7. "Te Deum" (music given).
8. Second Lesson.
9. "Benedictus dominus deus Israel" of which there are two settings to the Vth and VIIIth Tones respectively.

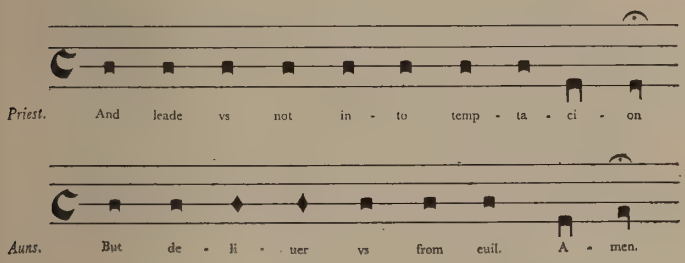
10. Then follows the triple invocation (with music)—

"Lorde haue mercy upon us.
Christ haue mercy upon us.
Lorde haue mercy upon us."

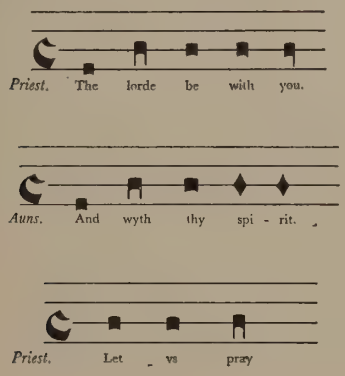
11. The Creed (in monotone) by "The Quere with the Priest."

12. "Oure father" in monotone (up to the words "agaynst us,") then:

13.



14. Then follow the Responses as they now appear in the "Book of Common Prayer," except that after "And take not thy holy spirit from us," we have:



15. Collect for the day.
16. Collect "O God which arte auctor of peace and louer of concorde."
17. Collect "O lorde . . . . which hast safely brought us to the begynnyng of thys daye"; etc.

(These Collects, with their Amens, were all in monotone.)

"Thus endeth Mattyns."

EVENSONG opened like Matins with:

1. "Oure father," etc.
2. "O lord open," etc.
3. "O God make spede," etc.
4. "Lord rebuke me not,"
   etc., sung to the VIIIth Tone before the Psalms, apparently by way of an antiphon.
5. The First Lesson.
6. Two settings of the "Magnificat" to chants in the Ist and VIIIth Modes respectively.
7. The Second Lesson.
8. "Nunc dimittis" (two chant settings in the Vth and VIIth Modes respectively).
   The rest of the Service (except that the Creed was omitted) followed the present "Book of Common Prayer" up to the Third Collect. And there Evensong ended.

You will notice that both Mattyns and Evensong ended at what we should now call "the Third Collect," and were, therefore, only about half as long as the Morning and Evening Prayer of to-day.

9. Then follows a setting of the "Benedicite" resembling the "Tonus peregrinus."
10. Then the "Quicunque vult" is "noted" in the IVth Mode.
    At this point occurs the COMMUNION SERVICE in the following order:
1. The Introite.

2. Kyrie, *i.e.*, "Lord haue mercy upon us.
Christ haue mercy upon us.
Lord haue mercy upon us."

It will thus be seen that the musical setting of the Responses to the Commandments in the present "Book of Common Prayer" necessitates a very free adaptation of Merbecke's music.

3. "Gloria in excelsis."
4. The Crede.
5. The Offertories (15 in number).
6. The Preface, with its preceding Versicles and Responses:
"The lorde be with you," etc.
"Lift up your heartes," etc.,
followed by the Proper Prefaces, as in the present "Book of Common Prayer." All in monotone.
7. Sanctus and Benedictus:
"Holy, Holy, Holy, lorde God of hostes. Heauen and earth are full of thy glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the lorde; Glory to the lorde in the highest."
8. The Prayer for the whole state of Christes Churche.

(This was all sung in monotone. It differs considerably from the text of the present Prayer Book.)

9. "The lord be with you," and its response.
"Oure father," and its response.
"The peace of God," etc., with its response.
10. The Post Communions (sixteen in number).
11. "The lorde be with you," and its response.
12. Collect "Almightie and euerlyuyng god," with Amen (all in monotone).
13. "The peace of God," etc. (no notes to this).

FINIS

AT THE BURIALL OF THE DEAD.

1. Responds—
(*a*) "I am the resurrection"
(*b*) "I know that my redemer lyueth"

(*c*) "We brought nothyng in to this world"
(*d*) "Man that is born of a woman"
(*e*) "In the midst of life we be in death"
(*f*) "I heard a voyce from heauen"
(all in monotone).

2. The Psalms (to the VIIIth Tone).
3. "Lorde haue mercy upon us," etc.
4. "Oure father."
5. Versicles and Responses as follows:

Priest.	"Entre not O Lord into Judgement with thy seruant."
Aunswer.	"For in thy sight shall no lyuing creature be iustified."
Priest.	"From the gates of hell."
Aunswer.	"Deliver their soules o lord."
Priest.	"I beleve in the goodnes of the lord."
Aunswer.	"In the land of the lyuyng."
Priest.	"O lord graciously heare my prayer."
Aunswer.	"And let my cry come unto thee."
Priest.	"Let us pray."

6. Collect "O lorde with whome do lyue the spirites of them that be dead," etc.

"At the Communion when there is a Buriall," the order is as follows:

Introite ("Like as the harte") to an VIIIth Mode chant;
Kyrie;
Collect;
Sanctus and Benedictus;
Agnus dei.

The book ends with the composer's name—

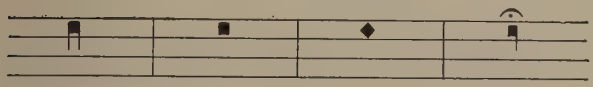
JOHN MERBECKE

in large capitals.

Let us now turn to the actual music. I have noticed an increasing tendency to speak of it as Plainsong, and have even heard of attempts to treat the notes as Plainsong notes (*i.e.* all of equal length), and to sing them in what

is termed the Solesmes manner. That Merbecke had no such intention is clear from his preface which runs as follows:

IN THIS BOOKE
is conteyned so much of the Order of Common
Prayer as is to be song in Churches; Wherein
are vsed only these iiii sortes of notes



The first note is a strene note, and is a breue.
The second is a square note, and a semy breue.
The iii a prycke, and is a mynymne. And when
there is a prycke by the square note, that
prycke is half as muche as the note
that goeth before it. The iiii
is a close, and is only vsed
at ye end of a verse.

If words mean anything at all, these words mean that Merbecke meant to give each note a distinct mensural value. Whether the music sounds better when sung according to Merbecke's directions or according to Plainsong directions is a question on which I do not propose to enter. I only wish to make clear what Merbecke's directions actually were—a point which seems to be overlooked by the modern advocates of a "Plainsong rendering." Merbecke further emphasises the fact that his music is not Plainsong, but mensurable, by his constant use of dotted notes. What he really did was to follow a practice common enough on the Continent, as exhibited in the well-known "Missa Regia," and the Masses of Dumont and others of writing freely in the modal idiom of the time for voices in unison. The practice is common enough to-day in northern France. The local schoolmaster—steeped in the idiom of Plainsong—composes unison music in his own vein, with Plainsong mannerisms.

Nearly every religious community I know possesses some such music. When the divine afflatus seized Brother Ambrose or Brother Ildephonsus, and moved them to musical composition, the result was unison writing reminiscent of Plainsong, which—combined with the composer's own notions—made it what I have no doubt Brother Ambrose or Brother Ildephonsus alluded to (with the customary blush, of course) as "A little thing of my own."

And in this connexion may I venture on a word in defence of Stainer's well-known setting of Merbecke's Creed and Gloria in the "Cathedral Prayer Book"? I have read many attacks on that publication (1) because of Stainer's modern harmonies to Merbecke's alleged "Plainsong"; and (2) because he did not make Merbecke's notes of equal length, as in the case of Plainsong. I make no reply to the first charge, except to remark that Merbecke's music is not Plainsong. To the second charge I can only say that those who make it can not have read Merbecke's own preface, in which he gives definite mensurable values to every note he uses, so that Stainer (however much his harmonies are open to criticism) does at least give us Merbecke's notes in the manner in which Merbecke directed them to be sung.

The fact is that there is no *authentic* Plainsong throughout the book, excepting the Versicles and Responses at the opening of the Mattins and Evensong, and those which occur later on in those Services. The rest of Merbecke's adaptations (so-called) bear only a very shadowy likeness to the originals. Possibly he was bound to work in accordance with Cranmer's "opinion," viz. that there should be "for every syllable a note." He evidently worked from a late Sarum MS., such as the Erlyngham noted Breviary in the Chapter Library there, or British Museum MS. 32427.

MATTINS. There is only one setting of the TE DEUM in the Latin Antiphoners of the old English "Uses," which is practically the same as the *Tonus Solemnis* in the

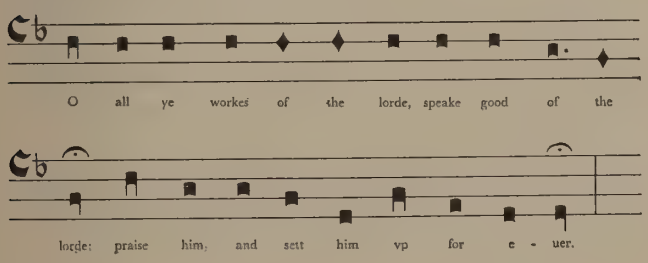
"Editio Vaticana." Merbecke's adaptation is, in my opinion, quite as good as the *Tonus Simplex* in the last-named book. (My references in this essay to the "Vaticana" are dictated by one reason, and one reason only, viz. that to look up references in early English MSS. at the British Museum or elsewhere is a long and tedious process, whereas a Vatican "Graduale" or "Antiphonale" can be purchased of any bookseller for a few shillings.)

Merbecke's choice of Tone V for the BENEDICTUS would seem to be arbitrary. Tone VIII was a much more usual setting, as it occurs very often to that Canticle in the Antiphoners, and on the great Festivals, *e.g.* Christmas, Epiphany, and Easter.

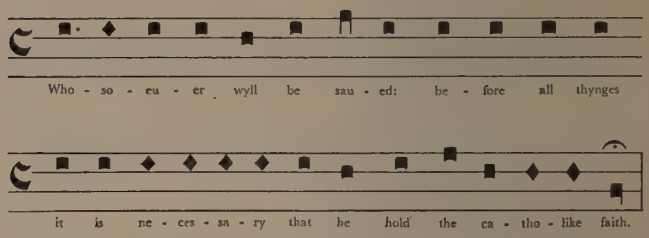
EVENSONG. Although Antiphons were abolished in the First Prayer Book of Edward VI, and therefore left Merbecke free to set Psalms and Canticles in any tones he chose, there seems little doubt but that his choice fell on Modes I and VIII for the MAGNIFICAT because those were the ones which had been most frequently used in the old service of Vespers.

The choice of Tones V and VII for the NUNC DIMITTIS was, doubtless, dictated by the fact that the former was the Sarum use for all the great feasts but one, and that Tone VII occurred (in the same use) throughout Advent, and at Easter Compline.

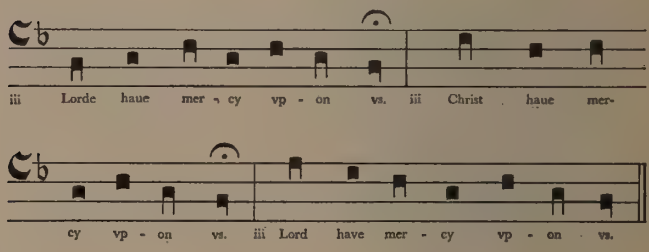
BENEDICITE. For this Merbecke chooses the English form of *Tonus Peregrinus*.



ATHANASIAN CREED. This is set in the IVth Mode. In the Sarum Breviary there were five Antiphons to it, of which three were in the Ist Mode, one in the Vth and one in the IVth. This last was used on all Sundays out of Eastertide when the Office was *de tempore*. It would, therefore, have been familiar to Merbecke; hence possibly his choice of that Mode.



AT THE COMMUNION. The KYRIE is clearly taken from the Sarum "Missa pro defunctis."



It will be noted that the *Gloria in excelsis* retains its place after the *Kyrie* as in the Latin Mass, and is not placed at the end of the Service, as in the present "Book of Common Prayer."

Both *Gloria* and *Credo* are Merbecke's own composition, and do not follow any Plainsong original, though the intonation of the former and fragments of the melody here and there are derived from, or faintly reminiscent

of, the IVth Mode *Gloria in excelsis* from the Mass "in festis duplicibus" (*cf.* Vaticana, No. IV).

The *Sanctus* and *Benedictus* is a compressed (tabloid) form of the IInd Mode setting of the Mass entitled "In Dominicis" (*cf.* Vaticana. Mass No. XI).

The *Agnus Dei* is based upon a Sarum melody, which does not occur in "Vaticana."

The 15 Offertories and the 16 Post Communions (which follow the *Agnus Dei*) are probably Merbecke's own composition. The late Dr. George Herbert Palmer once described them, in a letter to me, as "dull, not to say ugly, and without rhythm," but they are not altogether without interest from other points of view, and I often wonder why they are not included in modern editions of Merbecke's Communion Service.

At the Burial of the Dead. The three Responds in the VIIIth Mode bear only a faint resemblance to real Respond-melodies, though, perhaps, as much as could be expected from Cranmer's "one note to a syllable" injunction. There are not a few of the old Responds which have an "Incipit" something like Merbecke's IInd and IIIrd (g:a.g.f.g. *or* g.a.f.g.a.g.), but beyond this I can find no similarity. So with the Antiphons "Man that is borne" and "I heard a voice." Both of them have an opening musical phrase that is common enough in the old Antiphons, but nothing more that I have been able to identify.

"In the midst of life" is, undoubtedly, based on the old Respond "Libera me."

The *Kyrie*, *Sanctus*, and *Agnus Dei* are slightly simplified from the Sarum forms for the daily Mass for the Dead.

Merbecke as Author. Merbecke seems to have had a fondness for authorship throughout his whole life, and his last forty years seem to have been given up to it entirely. His works are voluminous, and are entirely theological or polemical. Whether his abandonment of composition in favour of authorship was due to a loss of hearing (which seems indicated in the preface to one of his books that I shall presently quote), or to religious

conviction of the vanity of mere artistic pursuits cannot, I am afraid, be determined with any certainty. I am inclined, however, to think that his religious tracts and other writings were inspired by a perfectly sincere and honest desire to do what he could for the Protestant cause which he had embraced with so much fervour. His style is vigorous, not to say racy in his polemical pamphlets, but is somewhat dull and redundant in his more serious work. As a specimen of the former, I give the title and part of the dedication of his "Conference between the Pope and his Secretary." (The reference to the author's deafness occurs here):

TITLE PAGE.

Examples | drawen | out of ho- | ly Scripture, with their | Applications fol- | *lowing.* | And therewithall a briefe | *Conference between the Pope* | and his Secretarie, wherein is | opened his great blasphe- | mous pride, the which | *by him is maintained* | *unto this day.* | By me I.M. | *Examine all things (in these* | *Examples) & hold that which* | *is good.* 1 Thess. 5, 21. | Printed by T. East, 1582. |

DEDICATION.

To the right Worshipfull Master Humfrey Michel Esquire, his bound & dayly Oratour, I. Marbecke, wisheth the increase of faith, with all godly knowledge in Iesus Christ.

Whereas (Right worshipfull) it may of some (peradventure) be thought a great presumption in me, to deale in such kind of studie as doth not belong unto my vocation: yet considering how that it hath pleased the Lord (by restraint of hearing) to make me unable to doe mine office in the one, and to giue me some little sparke of knowledge in the other, therein to exercise my minde: I think it much better to serue him therewith (according to the measure of his gift bestowed on me) then for to spend away time in idlenesse, whereof no good can arise.

For if I should not lay out the Lords money, that so it might rather increase then diminish, it might bee saide (not without good cause) I were an idle & loytering seruant.

Therefore indeuouring my selfe to auoyd the reproach of a slothfull loyterer, I trust no good man will count me blame worthy, so long as my meaning is to do all that in me doth lye, to the praise & glory of God, the profit of my Christen brethren, & increase of knowledge unto my selfe . . . . O Lorde, saith the Prophet Dauid, I loue thy commandements aboue either gold or precious stone . . . . But two sorts of people there be, that do least regard & be most unmindfull of this good exãple of holy king Dauid. The first is the carnall Gospeller, in that he delighteth much more in the vaine & delectable plesures of this unstable & brittle world, then he doth in the tast or sweetnesse of Gods holy word. The other is the wilfull & stubborne Papist, which hath more fancie to the darke traditions of Poperie, then in the imbracing the Gospell of Iesus Christ although the one be the food of the soule, & the other a noysome infection, both unto soule & bodye. The sincere truth (God be praised) of Christes holy doctrine is daily taught & preached unto them both. But as the Citizens of Anathet in no wise did loue to heare their faults reproued of the Prophet Ieremy: so neither can the carnall gospellers nor yet the stiffnecked Papist abide the voyce of the godly Preachers, when as they crye out against their euill trade to amendment of life, the Gospell professor to live Gospell like, & the Papist to cast off the yoake of Antichriast, and turne unto Christ.

In this lyttle Volume, I have collected . . . . and somewhat have touched also the Luciferous pride of that monstrous Dragon of Rome, & dealt as fauorably with him (as the little beast called Saura doth with the men that he findeth sleeping, tickleth him all about the mouth) to awake him out of his deadly errours, wherein he hath snorted so long. . . . .

The Pope is pictured as a very monster of iniquity. His Secretary, although engulfed in the slough of Popery is something of an "honest doubter," and has an argument with the Pope on the subject of the Catholic Faith. All the stupidity and arrogance are given to the Pope, and all the wisdom and sweet reasonableness are attributed to the Secretary, who triumphantly vanquishes the Pope in argument.

"The Lives of Holy Saincts" is a thick volume containing short biographies of all the characters mentioned in Holy Scripture (a sort of Bible "Who's Who"). Its style is quaint and naive; as, for example, the note on Agag, which begins: "Agag was a very fat man and King of the Amalekites." Merbecke confines his biographical notes by no means to holy saints. Along with such exemplary people as Amram, Jochebed, Peleg the son of Eber, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, we have questionable characters like Alexander the Coppersmith, Joram the son of Josaphat, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; and Ananias and Sapphira; nor does he neglect specimens of absolute blackguardism such as Ahab, Abimelech, Judas Iscariot, and Zimri who slew his master.

Merbecke's "Book of Notes and Commonplaces" is, as I have said, a portentous volume of 2,030 pages, and is a vigorous attack on every article of the Catholic religion. He repeats himself a good deal, but his main theme is that the priesthood disappeared with the Mosaic Law; that without a priesthood there can be no sacrifice; that the Lord's Supper is, therefore, not a sacrifice but a commemorative rite. In saying this I am not advancing any arguments one way or the other, but merely stating the facts as Merbecke gives them. Merbecke's book is easily accessible at the British Museum, and anyone who is sufficiently interested in the matter can readily find out by inspection of them whether my description is accurate or not. The one point about the book which struck me especially was that, be his style what it may—dull, turgid, vehement, didactic, or even violently abusive

—one cannot help feeling that he was quite sincere. He calls a spade a spade, and that very trenchantly; he leaves you in no doubt about what he means by the terms Catholic and Protestant; and there is no suspicion of hypocrisy or *arrière pensée*.

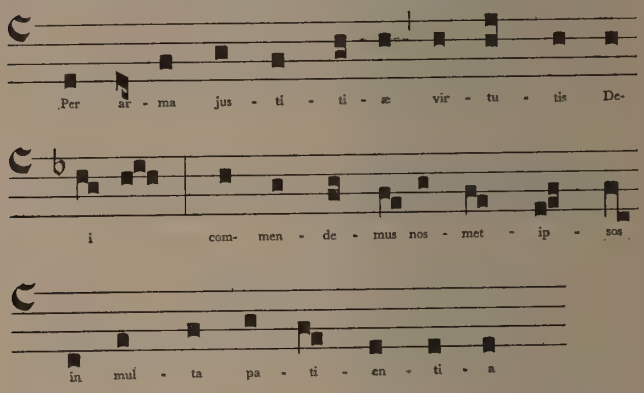
In Grove's Dictionary, and in every other account of Merbecke which I have seen, he is credited with the authorship of a pamphlet entitled "A RIPPING UP OF THE POPE'S FARDEL." From the title I am sure we had a right to expect a very racy document, but I have been unable to trace a single copy of this work. It is not in the British Museum or the Bodleian. I have communicated with every library at Oxford and Cambridge, as well as with many others, but without result. I have no doubt the pamphlet did exist, for it appears—though without any author's name—in the Register of the Stationers' Company in 1581: and Bohn's edition of "Lowndes" gives the detail "Octavo" as well as the date, from which I infer that either Lowndes or the later editor had seen a copy. The indexes of "Book Prices Current," however, record no sale of the book.

MERBECKE AS COMPOSER. The technique shown in those compositions of Merbecke which have come down to us is so advanced that one cannot believe he was other than a prolific composer. But in spite of diligent search, I have been able to find nothing of his beyond the following:

1. Mass. "Per arma iusticie" for 5 voices (Bodleian MS., Mus. Sch. E. 376-81).
2. Motet. "Domine Jhesu Christe" for 5 voices (Bodleian MS., mus. e 1-5).
3. "A Virgine and Mother" for 3 voices. Baldwin MS., Buckingham Palace Library. It is quoted by Hawkins.
4. Motet. "Ave dei patris filia." Peterhouse Library. (The tenor part of this motet is missing.)

The Mass is found in a set of part-books which contain seventeen others, including Tye's "Missa Euge bone."

The music is founded on the following Antiphon for the Psalms in the Office of None, on the Mondays in Lent:



This melody is better known in its setting to the words of the first Antiphon at Lauds and Vespers of Trinity Sunday.

The tune had a great fascination for English composers. Taverner founded one of his six-part Masses on it, and it also forms the *canto fermo* of that form of composition to which English composers were so much addicted under the title of "In Nomine." It is a fine, bold tune in the Ist Mode. Of course, the polyphonic composers naturally turned its constituent notes into breves for their *canti fermi*, and in this way it lost something of its flexibility of phrasing, as was only to be expected. The voices used in the Mass are as follows:

Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Baritone, and Bass.

Like many of Tallis's compositions, it implies basses of an extraordinary low range, which one does not usually meet with nowadays excepting in Russia. I have, therefore, found it necessary in performance to transpose the music up a minor third, and even then it constantly takes the basses down to low F. I scored the Mass about the

same time as the three six-part ones of Taverner (one of them on the same theme) from the same MS., and have noted many points of contrast. Taverner gives us much more precise "points of imitation"; he gives us longer and more clearly defined melodic phrases in the separate parts. Merbecke does not employ the canonic form to the same extent as Taverner, and his phrases in the single parts are constantly interrupted with rests, giving them a rather jerky and scrappy appearance. His parts lack the broad sweep and distinctive character of Taverner's. As I proceeded with the scoring (comparing it with my still fresh memories of Taverner), I was inclined to think that the music might not prove supremely interesting in performance. This is only one more instance of what one continually comes across in the works of the old English composers, and shows that however well we may think we have grasped the idea of a piece of music on paper, we are continually being surprised by its coming out better in performance than one could have imagined. But although Merbecke's part-writing has not the easy grace of Taverner, it has a certain rugged and forceful directness all its own. Not only was he (like his English contemporaries) a master in the art of marshalling great masses of tone, but he also had—like them—the same keen and subtle instinct for vocal tone-colour. One of the defects of modern music seems to be that composers never seem to consider that two-part music can be effective by itself, and they are therefore driven to add an accompaniment of some sort to make it tolerable. Merbecke and his English contemporaries, however, constantly achieved most beautiful effects by two voices alone. They employed three-part writing with much greater frequency and freedom than we do nowadays, and they obtained most beautiful effects in vocal colour by the skilful way in which they grouped their voices. At one time it would be the three highest voices that were singing, at another the three lowest, thus giving the effect of a double choir; at another the highest, the

lowest and the middle one; while one of the most striking effects I remember is Taverner's combination of two parts, one a very high soprano and the other a very low bass. In all these subtle effects Merbecke is a master.

Merbecke was also a master of every theoretical device in the way of time, mood, prolation, etc. He uses sesquialtera freely, as well as ligatures. An instance of his skill fully justified by the artistic result is shown at the end of the *Agnus Dei*, where one part sings throughout in what we should now call 6-8 time, while the others are singing in what we should now call 3-4 time.

Like most English Masses of the period, "Per arma iusticie" has no *Kyrie*, but (like them also) the composer sets each of the three petitions of the *Agnus Dei* to separate music. As each of these movements is complete in itself, and the performance of the whole three at any given service would prove unduly long nowadays, I have usually found it possible to adapt one of them as a *Kyrie*.

The individual numbers of the Mass (*Gloria*, *Credo*, *Sanctus*, etc.) are continuous, but by means of full closes, and different groupings of voices, they form themselves into somewhat clearly defined movements. These divisions are as follows:

GLORIA.

1. Up to "Bone voluntatis." Full.
2. "Laudamus te . . . glorificamus te." T.Bar.B.
3. "Gracias agimus . . . filius patris." Full.
4. "Qui tollis . . . miserere nobis." T.Bar.B.
5. "Qui tollis . . . Jhesu Criste." S.A.T.B.
6. "Cum Sancto . . . Amen." Full.

CREDO.

1. Up to "Et terre." Full.
2. "Visibilium . . . invisibilium." T.Bar.B.
3. "Et in unum." S.A., and afterwards Full to "de celis."
4. "Et incarnatus." S.A.T.
5. "Crucifixus." S.A.B.
6. "Et resurrexit." T.B., then S.T.B., then Full to end.

Following a common English practice, the words from "Et in spiritum sanctum" to "remissionem peccatorum" are not set to music.

SANCTUS.

1. "Sanctus." Full.
2. "Sanctus, sanctus." T.Bar.B.
3. "Dominus Deus." Full.
4. "Pleni sunt." S.Bar.B.
5. "Gloria tua" to end. Full.

BENEDICTUS.

1. "Benedictus." S.A.
2. "Qui venit." S.A.Bar.
3. "In nomine." T.Bar.B.
4. "Hosanna." Full.

AGNUS DEI I.

1. "Agnus Dei . . . mundi." S.A.Bar.B.
2. "Qui tollis." T.Bar.B.
3. "Miserere nobis." S.T.Bar.B.

AGNUS DEI II.

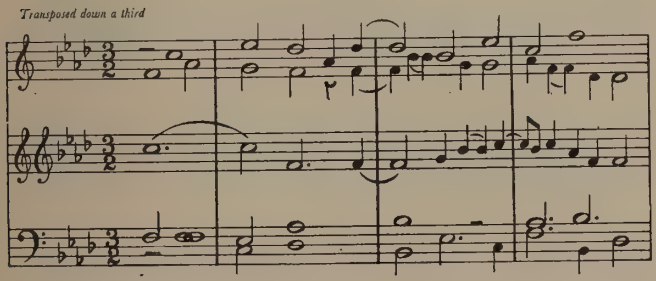
1. "Agnus Dei . . . mundi." A.T.Bar.B.
2. "Miserere nobis." Full.

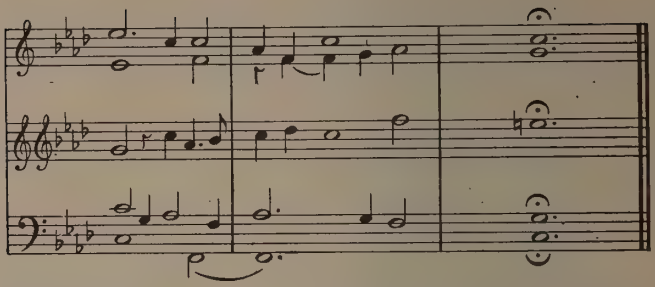
AGNUS DEI III.

1. "Agnus Dei . . . mundi." Full.
2. "Dona nobis." S.A.
3. "Pacem." Full.

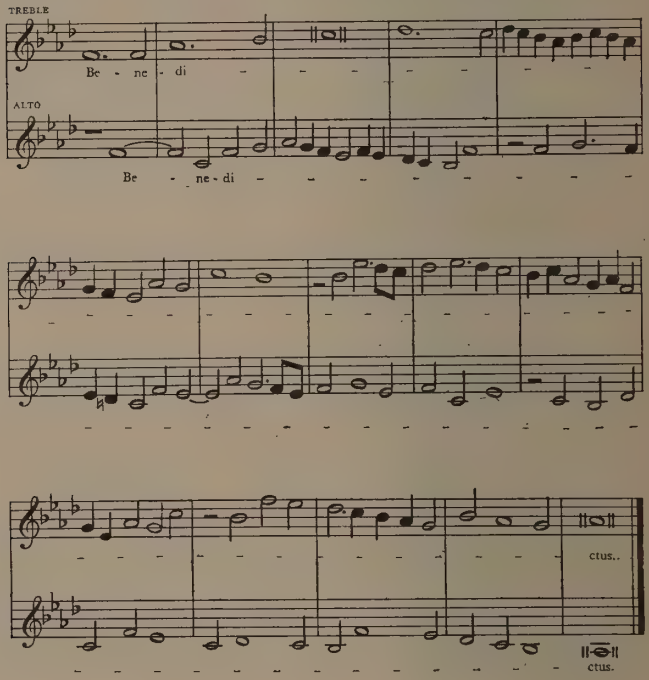
Notice the gorgeous breadth and sonority of the *Sanctus*,

Transposed down a third

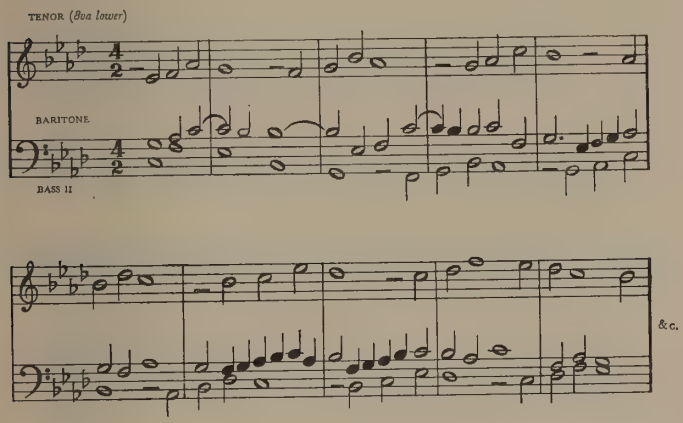




and then compare it with the tender beauty of the opening of the *Benedictus*.



Burney quotes the latter in his "History of Music," and most of us are familiar with it in that form; but I must confess I was not prepared for the almost ravishing beauty of this number until I heard it sung in a large building by boys' voices. Merbecke does not often indulge in Rosalia, but his double employment of it (in the tenor and bass parts) to the words "In nomine Domini" is striking, and I think most critics will agree that the effect "comes off."



Equally well contrasted are the various effects in tone-colour in the *Gloria*, and the fine vigorous freedom of the counterpoint in the final *Amen* is a worthy example of its period.

The Motet "Domine Jhesu Christ" is highly interesting. It is for the following voices:

Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Baritone and Bass.

It is divided into three separate and distinct movements. The first is in triple time, and the groupings of its voices are as follows:

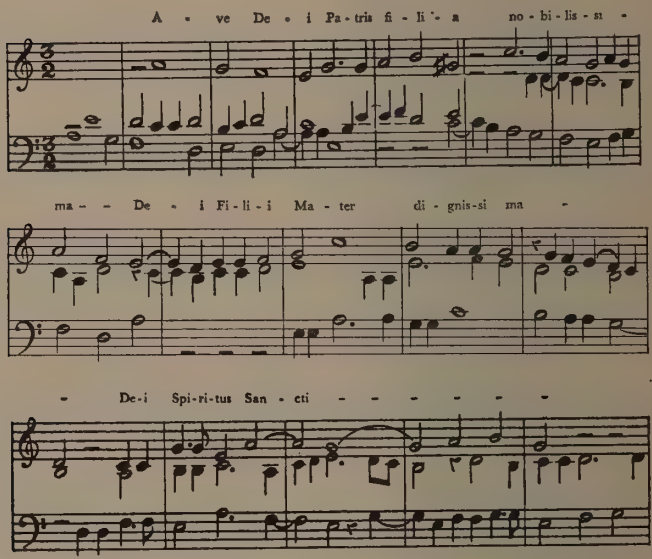
1. S. Bar.	3. A. Bar. B.
2. A.B.	4. Full

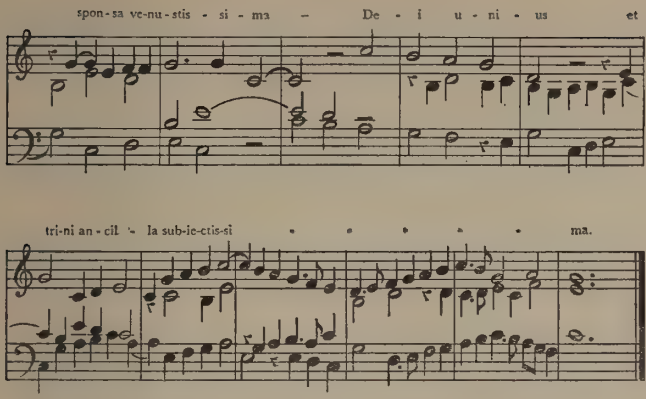
The second movement is in common time, and is a trio throughout for T.Bar.B. He employs "black notes" in the tenor part towards the close.

The third movement is also in common time, and the groupings are as follows:

1. Full.	3. A. T. Bar.
2. S. B.	4. Full.

The mutilated Motet at Peterhouse, "Ave dei patris filia," seems interesting enough to warrant the supplying of the missing tenor part. The words (in honour of Our Lady) were a great favourite with English composers of the period, but they do not occur in Dreves' "Analecta Hymnica" (the standard work on old hymn texts), nor have I been able up to the present to trace them to any liturgical source. Space does not admit adequate quotation from the Motet, but the opening Trio, here given, will furnish a fair idea of the general style.





The Christmas song is a very beautiful and tender composition. The author of the words is not given, but as I fail to find them elsewhere, one wonders whether or not they were Merbecke's own composition. In view of their beauty I make no apology for quoting them in full.

A VIRGINE and Mother, a Queene celestial,
As this daye maketh exemplificacion,
Bare our Sauiour Christ, the Lord imperial,
Who suff'red death for our saluacion.
It pleased Him so to do for our transgression;
Wherefore with meeke deuocion
Sing we the honor of His incarnacion.
A mayde immaculate, of all women the floure,
Hath borne Christ Jesu our Sa-ui-our.

MERBECKE'S TECHNIQUE. Merbecke's music shows great freedom and skill in the use of the mensurable theory of his period. As compared with Taverner he has less thematic material, and—as I have already said—his phrases are often scrappy and detached, but the ensemble is always broad, dignified, harmonically strong and satisfying. He was a master of choral effect, as may be seen from the way in which he obtains his contrasts

by the grouping of the voices. Although his chief characteristic is massive strength, he can be very tender, as (for example) in the *Benedictus* of the Mass, and in the Christmas song. Seeing that all the evidence seems to point to his music having been written before he was thirty, it may well be to us a matter of regret that a writer of such power should have apparently abandoned his art in favour of pamphleteering.

MERBECKE'S CHARACTER. We know little of his actual life beyond what is contained in the pages of Burney, and Hawkins, and the biography of him in Grove's Dictionary, and the Dictionary of National Biography. As these works are all accessible, I have not felt it necessary to repeat their details of Merbecke's career. But one characteristic of his seems to stand out from the rest, and that is his fearlessness. When a mere youth (in the reign of Henry VIII) his outspokenness led to his arrest and trial for heresy. Almost everyone knows the story of his escape from the death penalty by the aid of powerful friends, and how, in spite of this, the veracious Fox claimed him as a martyr to the Protestant cause. He seems to have continued quietly performing his duties at Windsor under the patronage of other powerful friends, which undoubtedly accounts for his being unmolested during the reign of Mary. The impression that his writings give me is that of a quite sincere and simple character, and if—as seems highly probable—it was not so much deafness as religious scruples which caused him to make a conscientious sacrifice of his art, we may regret his decision but we can admire his self-abnegation.

Since the last forty years of his life were devoted to theological writing, and forcible denunciation of all things Catholic, it is the irony of fate that his pamphlets are now forgotten, and that the only part-music of his which has attained the dignity of print, and come down to the present day, is the above-quoted hymn, which he himself would have been the first to describe as "reeking of mariolatry."

If, in his music, he did not scale the heights reached by Byrd; if he never plumbed the depths of strong emotion as did Tallis and Whyte; if his serious cast of mind knew not the *joie de vivre* of Taverner; if he lacked the breezy resilience of Phillips, the bland suavity of Shepherd, or the easy, confident technique of Robert Johnson, he yet remains one of the great figures of his time, represented (oh, the pity of it) by one Mass, one mutilated and one unmutilated Motet, and a three-part carol. But had he left nothing save the Mass "Per arma iusticie," that work alone is sufficient to place him among the Olympians to whom we tender our deepest admiration, and offer our sincerest homage and reverence.

SOME UNPUBLISHED TALLIS

NOTE ON THE FOLLOWING ESSAY.

Now that all the world and his wife are either printing and performing, or writing and talking about Tudor music, it is not uninstructive to recall the days—nearly thirty years ago—when it was practically a sealed book to the general public, and its revival a subject for mirth in musical circles.

In any research work one's critical opinions must necessarily be subject to constant modification and readjustment in the light of each fresh discovery. Critical essays in an early stage of such work soon tend to become "dated," and if I reprint this particular one (title and all, as it appeared in THE CHORD *of September, 1900) it is because I find (not without surprise) that it answers less to that description than others which I wrote during the same period.*

It was written at Downside in 1899, a year after I had discovered and performed Tallis' Lamentations,—then unknown to Grove's Dictionary or any musical histories.

Most of the works mentioned have since been printed, and the whole have become more or less familiar during the past quarter of a century through performance at Westminster Cathedral.—R.R.T.

DURING one's years of indiscretion it is often possible to find a certain amount of entertainment in the making and solving of puzzle canons and other forms of crazy scholasticism to which our medieval forefathers and their polyphonic successors were so peculiarly addicted. Riper years bring with them a degree of lukewarmness towards these pursuits when there are to hand others more frankly utilitarian, such as hunting for the "missing word," or discovering how often "she-camel" occurs in the Pentateuch.* A very little experience of the quaint conceits (the accepted term for them, I believe) of the old masters suffices to teach us that hardly one of them

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**These two "games" were the* fin de siècle *precursors of our present cross-word craze.*

is from an artistic point of view worth the trouble of scoring, and one henceforth eschews "puzzles," smile they never so invitingly from their illuminated MSS. But the case is different when one proceeds to score an apparently serious piece of polyphonic music, only to find it peter out in some form of learned tomfoolery. It is at such moments that one's heart beats in sympathy with the man who reads through a column of News from the Front* before discovering it to be a veiled advertisement for Mother Soothem's Pale Pills for Pink People. When treated in this way by the lesser composers, one usually says a few words (not necessarily for publication) and looks for the waste paper basket, but the occurrence of a "quaint conceit" in something by a favourite writer brings to one's lips the sorrowful cry of Weller senior,—"I didn't think you'd 'a done it!" In some such chastened mood I once found myself scoring the "Lamentations"† of Tallis. To stumble on no less than twelve musical puns in the space of eighteen bars was disconcerting, but I have lived to be thankful that a passing irritation did not lead me to shut up the part-books and so miss acquaintance with a fine piece of music. I have several times performed it with a full choir, and so beautiful is its effect, so admirably does it reflect the prevailing mood of the text, that I am now beginning to wonder whether the puns are not after all merely an extraordinary coincidence. The work is for five voices, and is a Latin setting of the first five verses of Jeremiah's Lamentations, as they were sung, according to the Sarum rite, at Tenebrae on the Wednesday evening of Holy Week. The words are practically the same as Gounod has used for his "Gallia," but there all resemblance ends. No greater contrast to Gounod's cheap sentiment could be found than the pathetic dignity of Tallis' lament. In Gounod we have a feminine abandonment to the luxury

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**i.e. in South Africa; the Boer war was then in progress.*
†*Brit. Mus. Addl. MSS. 17792—96.*

of weeping; Tallis has tears in plenty, but they are the tears of a strong man who will not let them fall. In the introduction (*Incipit Lamentatio Jeremiæ Prophetæ*) a peculiarly poignant effect is obtained by the haunting persistency with which a long-drawn note (*La*) falls on the first syllable of *Lamentatio* as each voice enters in turn. So genuinely artistic is it, that the singer forgets the pun, and forgives two subsequent ones in which the Basses on each recurrence of the word *Jeremiæ*, sing the second and third syllables to the notes *Re* and *Mi* respectively. Indeed so palpably sincere is the composer's mood, that I think we must acquit him of the intention to trifle with a solemn theme even though twelve puns stare us in the face. Those familiar with the rite of Tenebrae will remember that in each "Lection" the separate verses of lamentation are announced by the Hebrew letters Aleph, Beth, Ghimel, etc. To set letters of the alphabet to music which shall be in keeping with the general solemnity of the occasion is not an easy feat, and it is curious to note the effect on Tallis as the work progresses. The first one (Aleph)—when he was fresh to his task, and possessed by the dominant idea of the service—is full of a tense, pent-up emotion; the note of grief is struck at once, and the transition to the lament *Quomodo sedet sola civitas plena populo* is natural and artistic. In the second (Beth) we have gravity and seriousness, but the first outburst of feeling has spent itself, and the voices subside restfully in the major mode. Tallis lacked the spiritual exaltation which could carry Byrd through a long work, so it is not wonderful that after *Ghimel* has been sung, we find him expressing himself in more or less commonplace fashion. *Daleth* and *He* become mere contrapuntal exercises.* Tallis was frankly human, and it is in the nature of purely human emotion to wear itself out by its very intensity. It is otherwise when the motive force is spiritual

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**After performing the work for 24 consecutive years I have been obliged to modify this opinion.*

in character, hence we find Byrd, right to the end of a long work like the five-part Mass, carried to flight after flight of ecstasy. I am convinced that an auctioneer's bill of sale would have inspired him had he known beforehand that he was setting it for use in church. This Lamentation too—fine as it is—shows Tallis to be deficient in that constructive faculty which prevented Byrd from ever losing sight of the broad outlines of a great idea. While Byrd's greater works carry us with a fine sweep from start to finish, Tallis over and over again lets us down by some provoking anticlimax; his power of concentration seems to fail him, or perhaps it would be truer to say that his sense of proportion is at fault. He does not, like Byrd, give the impression of a builder rearing a great structure from a great plan, where every detail, however beautiful, is subordinate to the main design. His work is too unequal; he too frequently elaborates an unimportant detail at the expense of others which would seem to bear fuller treatment. To take an example:—The first Lection (consisting of three "Lamentations") concludes with the appeal *Jerusalem, Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum!* Up to this point Tallis has given us beautiful and sincere music throughout, and the *Jerusalem* comes as a fitting conclusion, with such grave tenderness is the appeal made. We get the anticlimax when Tallis attempts the introduction to the second Lection (*De lamentatione Jeremiæ prophetæ*). The strong feeling which tided him over the previous one is gone, and the spun-out contrapuntal exercise which he gives us is but a poor substitute. In a lesser man the result would have been sheer bathos, but Tallis was too sincere an artist to achieve that. The music which immediately follows *Ghimel* is (as I have already said) perfunctory, and even the desolate outcry, *Viæ Sion lugent eo quod non sint qui veniant ad solemnitatem: omnes portæ ejus destructæ*, leaves the composer comparatively unperturbed. At the very end of the last lament, however, we have a touch of real pathos as, in full rich chords without

imitation or figuration, he gives out the concluding words—*parvuli ejus ducti sunt in captivitatem ante faciem tribulantis*. Another setting of *Jerusalem* (with an odd note of complacency about it, in striking contrast to the half tender, half warning appeal of its predecessor) brings this unequal but genuinely interesting work to a close. I have judged it—as it deserves to be judged—by the highest standard, so that the above strictures must not be taken to imply that it is ineffective or unsuited to the great ceremonial occasion for which it was written (indeed, I have proved the contrary by the practical test of performance). If it is not uniformly excellent, it is never trivial; even the comparatively (I use the word advisedly) dull portions are marked by a noble dignity, and the genuine emotion of the earlier numbers is tempered by an artistic self-restraint. It is emphatically worthy music, and any choirmaster who undertook to perform it in place of some of the maudlin stuff so prevalent in Lent, would find himself amply repaid for his trouble. The whole work takes about twenty-two minutes in performance, but each section is complete in itself and could be given separately.

Another work of considerable practical interest and no little melodic beauty is Tallis' Mass for four voices (British Museum Additional MSS. 17802—5). Mr. Henry Davey is the only English historian who has mentioned its existence, and among the Germans, Nagel alludes to it in somewhat general terms.* It is in many ways a curious work, showing as it does the composer's strong and weak points sharply contrasted. It has (in common with most Masses of the period) no Kyrie, and follows the prevailing custom of the time in omitting a large portion of the Credo (from *Et iterum* to *remissionem peccatorum*). The copyist's errors and omissions are numerous, and render the work of scoring slightly exasperating at times, but when all is done the

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**Readers must remember that this was written in the year 1899.*

Mass is distinctly worth the trouble, if only for the three numbers Sanctus, Benedictus, and Agnus Dei. The first named is a broad and massive piece in Tallis' best manner, the second a charming example of smooth vocal writing in contrast with the crabbedness of much Tallis counterpoint, and the third a really tender and pathetic number, full of genuine devotional feeling more akin to Byrd's than almost anything of Tallis' which I have seen. It is in the longest numbers that Tallis is seen at his weakest, the most striking example of this being the construction of the Gloria. As a matter of fact only eighteen bars* of it are original, and they mostly consist of full chords after the manner of his "Dorian" service. The remaining five sections are each lifted bodily from some other portion of the Mass as follows:—two from the Agnus Dei, and one each from the Sanctus, Benedictus, and Credo. In spite of this patchwork arrangement, the effect in performance is much better than might be supposed, but the lack of cohesion between the different sections is always apparent.† The Credo, in spite of its rather tame opening, is a more interesting number. There is some vigorous thematic development at *Et vitam venturi*, and the finish is well worked up to, but the middle portion (*Incarnatus* and *Crucifixus* sections) is more or less of a misfit, the music being the same as the *Domine Deus* section of the Gloria. It is difficult to say whether it was originally written for the Credo or the Gloria; but I am beginning to think it must have been for the latter, as it so completely expresses the sentiment of the words—a thing which cannot be said of it with equal certitude in the Credo. A singularly bald effect is sometimes produced by the repetition in two-part counterpoint of music written else-

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**I mean, of course, my own bars (of four minims); the MS. is unbarred.*

†*Here again (after a quarter of a century's continual performance) I have modified my opinion.*

where in four. This is done by the childlike expedient of dropping out two parts altogether. By such curious makeshifts do the two long numbers spin themselves out; flashes of beauty break in at times, but they are only flashes, nothing is developed from them, and they disappear as suddenly as they came. It seems as though Tallis had set out with the intention of writing only the Sanctus, Benedictus, and Agnus (that he wrote them *con amore* is beyond doubt), and on being required to complete the Mass had done the Gloria and Credo in more or less perfunctory fashion, and under a considerable sense of boredom. That is the only explanation which occurs to me of the great difference between the long and short numbers of the work. Let me hasten to add, however, that Tallis even in his moments of boredom is never entirely uninteresting; in fact, I must repeat—in speaking of the Mass—what I have already said respecting the Lamentations. When I speak of his dullness I only use the word in a relative sense; his "dullness" is generally to be preferred to the inspiration of some of his contemporaries, and at no time in this particular work does he become so entirely and genuinely dull as in his "Dorian" Service. I am, of course, aware that there are many who regard the "Dorian" Service as a noble piece of church music. I will not quarrel with them on what is after all a matter of taste, but merely express the conviction that if they think the "Dorian" Service worthy of admiration, much more will they be prepared to admire the works I have just been discussing. Indeed, my chief reason for drawing attention to them is not so much that they are unknown save to a few students, or on account of their practical value to choirmasters, but because they show us a Tallis of whom we know too little. It is the fate of too many of our great ones whose names are household words to be known to posterity by their least distinguished work. Ask the average organist what he knows of Tallis, and I doubt if his acquaintance with him will be found to extend beyond the Responses, and

the "Ordinal" and "Canon" hymn tunes: if he has had cathedral experience, he will know the "Dorian" Service and some half-dozen anthems; but it is safe to conjecture that until Dr. Mann published the forty-part Motet some years ago, not a single big work of Tallis was within reach of the general musical practitioner. There are everywhere signs of a revival in old polyphonic music: is it, therefore, too much to ask that some share of this attention should be given to Tallis,—that some addition should be made to the meagre catalogue of his published works, from the rich store of MSS. which at present are only accessible to students and musicians of leisure? It is too generally taken for granted that by a process of natural selection his best works have been brought to light in the three hundred and odd years which have elapsed since his death, that those which have survived in print must necessarily be his finest. I give an emphatic negative to the supposition. True, Hawkins prints his *Miserere*, but both he and Burney ignore an important work like the Lamentations while quoting minor compositions in full. His *Salve Intemerata* Mass has remained all these years unscored, unpublished, and unsung; and in the same MS. as the four-part Mass just discussed are some beautiful and perfectly satisfying compositions (I need only mention *Audivi; media nocte*, an *Alleluia*, on a Plain Chant melody, and a four-part *Magnificat*) which are no mere antiquarian curiosities, but (as I can testify from practical experience) genuinely interesting and delightful to sing. If it is as yet too early to expect appreciation of Tallis from Catholic choirmasters, it is not, I trust, unfitting to suggest to such others as are in the habit of adapting Latin music to English words, that they might (if they *must* adapt) try their hand, by way of change, on a composer whose name a churchgoing public honours in print, and whose music it systematically neglects in practice.

Finally, not the least among the advantages likely to accrue from a more general study of Tallis, would be the

dissipation of the absurd yet generally accepted notion that Byrd, though more an "all round" man than Tallis, is yet his "inferior in breadth and grandeur."* The more Tallis is known the more will he be appreciated, but a study of his works in conjunction with those of Byrd will sufficiently prove that in this case the disciple is indeed above his master.

**See Ouseley's additions to Naumann's History of Music.*

SOME SISTINE CHAPEL TRADITIONS

IT would perhaps be more correct to say "Some Papal Choir Traditions." But as the Papal Choir is inseparably associated with the Sistine Chapel, and as the traditions observed in that chapel were observed by the choir whether they sang there or elsewhere, perhaps the more colloquial title may be allowed to stand.

It does not appear to be widely enough understood that the Sistine Choir was the Pope's special body of singers, and was separate and distinct from the choir of St. Peter's, or the choir of St. John Lateran, which is the Cathedral of the Pope as Bishop of Rome. When the Pope attended St. Peter's, or the Lateran (or indeed any other Basilica), he was accompanied by the Sistine Choir, who performed all the music necessary, the choir of the church so attended was silenced for that particular function, save that they were allowed to sing as the Pope made his entry.

Most of the great feasts of the Church's year were celebrated by the Pope either in the Sistine Chapel or in his chapel in the Quirinal, now the palace of the King of Italy. But some were eventually held in St. Peter's. They were ushered in on the previous day by the "First Vespers" of the feast, and before dealing with them in detail it may be well to give the order of Vespers for all occasions according to the Sistine tradition.

1. *Deus in adjutorium* was intoned by the Pope himself, the choir making the usual response.

2. The first antiphon was intoned by the senior soprano. The remaining four antiphons were intoned respectively by the next four soprani in order of seniority. The antiphons themselves were sung in parts (*contrappunto*).

There appears to be nothing said as to the Psalms, so we may assume that they were sung either in Gregorian or "in music" as examples of the latter exist in the Vatican archives.

3. The "Little Chapter" was sung by a soprano, appointed by the senior soprano, who appears in these matters at least to have directed the proceedings. These soprani, it is hardly necessary to add, were men and not boys.

4. The soprani sang the Versicles and Responds.

5. The Magnificat was sung "in Falsobordone," but judging by music preserved in the archives, this term may be held to include the elaborate settings of Palestrina and his school. Then, as now, it was not permitted to sing the Gloria Patri until the incensation was finished. Nowadays the organ plays in all churches to fill up the gap until the Gloria commences. But no organ ever accompanied the Sistine Choir. They were therefore directed to repeat the Magnificat (as often as necessary) until all the Cardinals had been censed. They were then free to begin the Gloria Patri. And here we may note the direction applying to all other functions. When ceremonial occupied a longer space than its accompanying music, the music must be repeated until its particular ceremony was finished. There were never allowed any moments of silence.

6. The soprani sang the *Benedicamus Domino* (responded to by the whole choir).

We may now begin with the chief Papal functions of the year in chronological order.

The Circumcision (Jan. 1). The choirmaster was apparently at liberty to choose what music he wished for this and all other Masses throughout the year, except where we shall state the contrary. But the Motets after the *Offertorium* were apparently fixed by custom, at any rate they had become stereotyped by the time of Baini. The Motet on this occasion was *O magnum mysterium* of Palestrina. The Pope and Cardinals lunched together after the ceremony, and the Sistine Choir sang pieces of music (*concerti*) throughout the meal: whether sacred or secular does not appear.

THE EPIPHANY (Jan. 6). The Mass music is again unstated, but the Motet was Palestrina's now well-known *Surge illuminare Jerusalem* for double choir. This function, like the Circumcision, was held either in the Sistine Chapel or in the chapel in the Quirinal.

THE CHAIR OF ST. PETER (Jan. 18). This feast was held in the Sistine or Quirinal Chapels until 1839, when Gregory XVI ordered the celebration to take place in future in St. Peter's. The choir of St. Peter's sang Palestrina's *Tu es Petrus* as the Pope entered, and then handed over the rest of the music to the Sistine Choir. The Motet was Palestrina's *Tu es Pastor ovium.*

THE PURIFICATION (Feb. 2). This festivity was transferred in 1839 from the Papal chapels to St. Peter's, by order of Gregory XVI. The Antiphons in the procession were sung "in canto andante." Palestrina's gorgeous settings would indicate that this phrase must be interpreted to mean "figured music." The Motet was Palestrina's *Responsum accepit Simeon.*

ASH WEDNESDAY. With the exception of the *Offertorium* and the Motet, the whole of the music was Gregorian. The *Tractus* was directed to be repeated as often as necessary until the Pope was ready for the Gospel. The *Offertorium* "*Exaltabo Te*" was sung *in contrappunto.* No particular composer's name is given, but we may assume that Palestrina's famous setting of the words was sung at some time or another. This was "sometimes" followed by Palestrina's *Derelinquat impius.*

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT. This function was held in one or other of the Papal chapels, and throughout this essay this locality is to be assumed except when otherwise stated. The *Offertorium* was directed to be sung quickly (*solicitamente*) in order to give time for the Motet *Emendemus in melius*, by Gabrieli Galvex, to be sung "adagio."

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT. The Motet was *Ecce odor Filii mei*, by Archangelo Crivelli.

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT. The Motet was *Lamentabatur Jacob*, by "that celebrated master, Cristoforo Morales."

Adami says that the *Offertorium* was sung as quickly as possible so as to leave time for the above-named Motet, which he describes as "the most precious composition to be found in the Sistine archives." Singers were directed to give all their attention to a stately execution of the music, and Adami counsels his readers to give it, as listeners, a like attention, that they may "taste the beauty and sweetness of its melody."

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT. The Motet was *Cantemus Domino*, by "the great contrapuntist, Matteo Simonelli."

PASSION SUNDAY. The whole of the music was Gregorian with the exception of the Motet *Salvum me fac*, by Palestrina.

PALM SUNDAY. From 1839 this function was held in St. Peter's. All the music at the blessing of palms and during the procession was in Gregorian, the procession music thus contrasting with that on the Purification. The *Pueri Hebræorum* was sung by two contralti during the entire distribution of the palms. The alternating verses of the *Gloria Laus* were sung respectively by the soprani and the full choir. The "Ordinary" of the Mass (i.e. *Kyrie*, *Credo*, *Sanctus*, *Benedictus*, *Agnus Dei*) as well as the "Proper" (*i.e.* Introit, Gradual, Tract, Offertory, and Communion) was sung entirely in Gregorian. As elsewhere, great solemnity was given to the singing of the Passion. It was sung by three members of the Sistine Choir, who were in deacon's orders. The Narrator (*Chronista*) was always a tenor; the *Synagoga* always a contralto; and the *Christus*, a bass. The speeches of the mob (*voces turbarum*) were sung by the full choir. Chronista, Synagoga, and Christus of course sung the traditional Plainsong, but although no composer of the "Turba" music is given, we know from Mendelssohn's graphic account that Vittoria's setting had become stereotyped by the nineteenth century. After the *Offertorium* followed Palestrina's immortal *Stabat Mater* for eight voices. The Celebrant was directed to wait during its performance, so that due time might be given for its solemn execution.

In Baini's time the rule forbidding all but Gregorian for the "Ordinary" of the Mass was broken, and from that time onward the Benedictus was sung to the mæstro's setting for six voices. Moroni describes him as "the great Master, Baini." Opinions may differ on this point, but it at least shows in what esteem Baini was held in Rome.

Moroni states that owing to the great length of time occupied in the singing of the Passion it was the custom of the Pope—when the ceremony took place in the Sistine Chapel—to retire to the Sacristy and return in time for the Gospel. When the function was transferred to St. Peter's he used to rest in "an adjacent room behind the tomb of Alexander VIII."

WEDNESDAY IN HOLY WEEK. The opening antiphon at Tenebræ (*Zelus domus tuæ*) was intoned by the first soprano. The first Lamentation was sung to Allegri's four-part setting. The second and third Lamentations were sung to the official Plainsong by soprani. The Lessons were sung by soprani, beginning with the youngest. The Benedictus antiphon (*Traditor autem*) was intoned by two soprani, and the *Benedictus* itself was by Palestrina. Two soprani also sang the *Christus factus est* in Plainsong, which was followed by Allegri's *Miserere*. The Popes did not always attend Tenebræ on account of its lengthy music, particularly that of the various "Misereres." Pius VIII ordered that only six verses should be sung in "figured music," and the rest quickly to Plainsong. When the Pope did not attend officially he generally looked on for part of the service from his tribune.

MAUNDY THURSDAY. At Mass the motet was Palestrina's eight-part *Fratres ego*. At the procession to the altar of repose the hymn *Pange lingua gloriosi* was sung, the verses being given alternately in Plainsong and Polyphony. After the ceremony a dinner was given in the Salla Constantino to thirteen poor priests. They sat at table on a dais, elevated so that they could be seen by every one in the "immense concourse." The Pope accompanied them to the table, placed them himself, put on

an apron, washed his hands, and waited on them. At Tenebræ on this day the *Lamentations* were by Palestrina for four voices. Palestrina wrote more than one set of Lamentations for four voices, Moroni therefore identifies this particular set by saying that it is the one in which a bass enters at Jerusalem. This fixes it as the set in vol. xxv, p. 12, of Breitkopf and Härtel's complete edition. The music is for two soprani, one mezzo-soprano, and an alto for Lamentation No. I; and for mezzo-soprano, alto, tenor, *and bass* for Lamentation No. II. But Lamentation No. III is evidently the one which Moroni means; the distribution of parts is the same as Lamentation No. I up to the "*Jerusalem convertere*," which is in five parts, a bass being added to the other four. The *Miserere* was either that of Scarlatti or Felice Anerio (both for eight voices), Adami stating that the choice lay with the choir-master. But Moroni, writing in 1841, says that they were also at liberty to sing "that not less harmonious piece for two choirs by Tommaso Bai." But he also adds that "nowadays" they just as often sing that by Baini, "which is so highly praised."

Good Friday. The Pope and Cardinals assembled at S. Lorenzo, and went in procession to the church of the Holy Cross, where the Mass of the Presanctified was celebrated. They called at the Basilica of St. John Lateran *en route*, reciting (not singing) psalms the while. After the prophecy of Hosea, two contralti intoned the *Tract*, the choir continuing. The *Passion* was rendered in the same manner as on Palm Sunday, except that on this occasion the three deacons, while genuflecting to the Pope before singing, omitted the kissing of the feet. In 1725 Benedict XIII restored the ancient practice of having the Passion also read in Greek, by two students of the Greek College.

For the Adoration of the Cross two tenors used to go out from the choir towards the end of the prayers to the epistle side of the altar to answer *in quo salus*, etc., to the Celebrant, the choir continuing at *Venite adoremus* as is

the custom to-day. The *Improperia* (Reproaches) were apparently sung in every case to Palestrina's immortal setting. At Tenebræ the first Lamentation was Allegri's now well-known setting for four voices. Moroni says that a soprano strikes up the "Jerusalem." This can hardly mean that it was sung to Gregorian music, and (therefore) had the first phrase intoned by a cantor. As a matter of fact, Allegri's "Jerusalem" opens with an alto lead, and the timbre of an alto would naturally resemble the soprano of the *castrati* so closely as to account for Moroni's remark. The *Miserere* was the famous one of Allegri.

HOLY SATURDAY. It would be interesting to know the precise meaning of the term "in canto andante," so frequently employed by Moroni. Up to this point there is nothing in his book to indicate that it was used as a term denoting speed. And that it clearly refers to something else is shown by his remarks on the Mass of Holy Saturday. He says that the *Tract* after the fourth prophecy was (intoned by contralti and) sung "in canto andante," the *Kyrie* was sung "in canto fermo" and the *Gloria in excelsis* "in canto figurato" (i.e. in polyphony). After the Epistle a subdeacon (an "Auditore of the Rota") approached the Pope and announced the *Alleluia.* The triple *Alleluia* was (as now) sung by the Celebrant, a tone higher at each repetition, but it was answered by the choir "in contrappunto." The *Confitemini* which followed was intoned by two soprani, and two others rendered the Tract *Laudate Dominum.* They were required to make the music spin out until the deacon was ready to sing the Gospel. The Mass for this day contains no offertory, and the choir did not even sing a motet at that portion of the function. One need hardly remind readers that one of the features of the Mass of Holy Saturday is that it includes the "First Vespers" of Easter. They began with the triple *Alleluia*, sung by two soprani. Two other soprani intoned the psalm (*Laudate Dominum*) which follows, and the choir continued the psalm "in falsobordone." "Only two soprani" replied Alleluia at its conclusion. The Magnificat antiphon *Vespere*

autem Sabbati was intoned by the Celebrant and continued by the choir. Two soprani intoned the *Magnificat*, which was by Luca Marenzio. Marenzio's composition is for eight voices in the eighth Mode, the intonation being given (in all the copies the writer has seen) by a bass of the first choir. But as it is the ordinary Gregorian intonation, the fact of its being given to two soprani would not affect either the pitch or the structure of the music. *Ite missa est*, with its double "Alleluia," was of course sung by the deacon to the prescribed Plainsong, but the answer of the choir ("Deo gratias") was given "in canto figurato."

Easter Day. The function was held in St. Peter's. The Pope, attended by the whole Papal Court, went in a great procession to the door of the Basilica, where he was met by the Chapter and a military band "with drums." Then all entered the Basilica amid a ringing of bells, beating of drums, and military music. This concluded, the Vatican singers struck up the motet *Tu es Petrus*. Solemn Terce followed, the singers being placed in a gallery opposite the papal throne. With the exception of the versicle *Deus in adjutorium*, the *Capitulum*, and the Prayer, everything was sung by the choir. Two soprani intoned the *Benedicamus Domino*, the choir giving the response. High Mass followed, the Pope celebrating. The *Introit* was intoned by contralti, *Sicut erat* being sung adagio. At the *Pax vobis* after the *Gloria* the choir answered "Amen," in addition to the usual response (*Et cum spiritu tuo*). The Epistle and Gospel were given in both Latin and Greek. The choir then sang the *Graduale* "in canto andante." The Sequence (*Victimæ Pashali*) was always (in Moroni's time at least) sung to a setting of Matteo Simonelli. The motet at the offertory was "the most beautiful *Christus resurgens* of Felice Anerio; one of the finest pieces of the Cappella Sistina." On this day Moroni states that there was silence at the Elevation. The music of the first part of the *Agnus Dei* was repeated until the Pope was ready. Only then did the choir begin *Dona nobis pacem*. The *Communio* was then sung "in canto andante."

EASTER MONDAY. Both *Gradual* and *Sequence* were sung to music by Matteo Simonelli.

EASTER TUESDAY. The motet at the offertory was Palestrina's *Surrexit Pastor bonus* for two choirs.

SATURDAY IN EASTER WEEK. The motet at the offertory was Felice Anerio's *Voce mea.*

ASCENSION DAY. Palestrina's *Viri Galilæi* was the motet at the offertory.

PENTECOST. Two soprani intoned the *Alleluias* and the Sequence (*Veni sancte Spiritus*). The music of the latter was required to last until the Pope returned to the throne.

TRINITY SUNDAY. The motet at the offertory was Palestrina's *O beata, et benedicta, et gloriosa Trinitas.*

CORPUS CHRISTI. Probably on account of the lengthy and fatiguing procession, the Pope said low Mass on this day, during which the choir sang *Fratres ego enim* of Palestrina. They also sang *O Salutaris* after the Elevation. In the procession which followed, the Pope carried the Host. The procession included such vast numbers of clergy and people that the choir was distributed throughout its length at different points of concentration, only eight singers remaining near the Pope. The first section of the Sistine Choir walked after the Papal Chamberlains. The Cantors walked in the middle of the Papal cortege. *Lauda Sion* was sung by the section behind the Pope, "concertanto." *Pange lingua* was sung to the simple Gregorian tone so that the people might join. On arriving again at St. Peter's, *Amore langueo*, by Francesco Foggia, was sung by the section of the choir nearest the head of the procession. *Te Deum laudamus* was sung after entering the Basilica, and the whole ceremony finished with *Tantum ergo.*

ST. JOHN BAPTIST (June 24). Mass was sung in the Basilica of St. John Lateran, the motet at the offertory being *Fuit homo missus a Deo*, by Palestrina.

SS. PETER AND PAUL (June 29). The First Vespers of this feast were sung by the Pope himself (on June 28). This feast and that of Christmas Eve were the only

occasions when the Pope actually *sung* Vespers, as distinguished from *presiding* at Vespers. For the Mass, the Pope came in procession from the Vatican, *Tu es Petrus* being sung as usual when he entered the church. Solemn Terce preceded Mass. The hymn was intoned by two soprani and was "sung very quickly." The first soprano intoned the antiphon (*Argentum et aurum*), and the Psalm following (*Legem pone mihi Domine*) was intoned by two contralti. The Pope of course vested for Mass during Terce, and the music had to be quickened or slackened as the case might be, so as to finish when he was fully vested and ready. The motet at the offertory was Palestrina's(?) *Tu es Petrus*, and it was directed to be repeated on account of the length of the incensation.

All Saints (November 1). This function was held in the Sistine Chapel. The motet at the offertory was *Vidi turbam magnam*, and Adami says he was never able to discover the author.

All Souls (November 2). This of course was a Mass of Requiem, and was held in the Sistine Chapel. Moroni says that the whole of the music was "in contrappunto." But the fact that "the two senior soprani began the Gradual (*Requiem æternam*) and also intoned the Versicle" (*In memoria æterna*) would seem to indicate a Gregorian setting. In like manner the Tract (*Absolve*) was intoned by three couples of soprani, the verse *Et gratia* being intoned by the second couple, and the second verse (*Et lucis*) being intoned by the third couple, the choir continuing. The *Dies iræ* was also intoned by the first of these three couples. The Offertory stopped at the words *et semine ejus*, immediately preceding the verse *Hostias*, as the music was required to stop at the point where the Celebrant reached the *Orate fratres*.

On November 3 another Mass of Requiem was sung for all deceased Cardinals. The music was not specified, excepting that the choir was forbidden to repeat that which they had sung on the previous day.

St. Charles Borromeo (November 4). The Pope

"assisted" at this Mass, and the motet at the Offertory was Palestrina's *Ecce Sacerdos*.

ADVENT SUNDAY. The Forty Hours' Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament began on this day. Both parts of Palestrina's *Salvatorem exspectamus* were sung at the Offertory. During the procession nothing was sung except the hymn *Pange lingua*. The Mass of Deposition on the Tuesday following was a low Mass, during which the choir sang Palestrina's eight-part *Fratres ego enim* (as on the low Mass of Corpus Christi). They also sang *Comedite gentes*, by the same composer, after the Elevation.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION (December 8). Mass was sung either at S. Mary Major or in the Sistine Chapel, according to the wish of the Pope. Palestrina's *Sancta et immaculata Virgo* was the motet at the offertory.

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT. Both parts of Palestrina's *Jerusalem cito veniet* were sung at the offertory.

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT. Palestrina's *Veni Domine* was the motet at the offertory. Moroni thinks it "one of the most harmonious of Palestrina's pieces."

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT. Both parts of Palestrina's *Canite tuba in Sion* were sung as the motet.

CHRISTMAS EVE. The Pope sang the Solemn Vespers. He afterwards gave a concert, followed by a supper, to keep the people occupied until Matins. The concert took the form of a cantata on the mystery of the Nativity, and began at sunset. It was held in the Salla Borgia if the Pope were at the Vatican, and in the Paulina if at the Quirinal. The whole of the Sistine Choir attended, as well as numerous instrumentalists. The Cardinals then sat down to "a magnificent supper." The Pope said Grace, and then retired to his own apartments. Numerous references are made to this sacred cantata. Moroni says that the first rehearsal for the concert was held on November 25. The Pope sometimes attended along with the general public. On Christmas Eve the performance was only for the Papal Court. On Innocents' Day, however, it was repeated for distinguished guests. It was sometimes

performed in the Raphael Chambers. The Pope presided at Matins, which were given with great solemnity; but no mention appears of what (if any) polyphonic music was then performed. In view of the heavy musical programme at the Midnight Mass, it is probable that the whole of the music at Matins was Gregorian. At the Midnight Mass both parts of Vittoria's *Quem vidistis pastores* were sung after the Offertory. The writer has been unable to glean any particulars of the nature of the music (if any) at the second or "Aurora" Mass. The third Mass of Christmas Day was sung by the Pope in St. Peter's. For the motet at the offertory the music was either Vittoria's *Quem vidistis* or G. M. Nanino's *Hodie nobis cœlorum Rex.*

St. Stephen (December 26). For the motet, both parts of Palestrina's *Stephanus autem* were given, the second part (*obdormivit*) being sung pianissimo.

St. John (December 27). Palestrina's motet, *Hic est beatissimus discipulus*, was sung "con secondo parte."

The information given in this essay is not new, but so far as the writer is aware, this is the first time it has been given in English. The facts have been gathered chiefly from Adami's "Osservazioni per ben regolare il coro dei Cantori della Cappella Ponteficia" published in Rome in 1771, and "Le Cappelle Pontificie | Cardinalizie e Prelatizie | opera | storio-liturgica | Di Gaetano Moroni Romano | Primo aiutante di camera di sua santità | Gregorio XVI," published in Venice in 1841. The writer is also indebted to two Roman friends for much additional help in the way of elucidation of obscure passages in the works named above.

WHY IS CHURCH MUSIC SO BAD?

THAT church music is in a bad way all the world over will not, I think, be denied by anyone whose opinion matters. In England it is perhaps better than elsewhere, but that is not saying much. On the continent, it is largely in the hands of amateurs. In Germany there are some good church organists, and in France some excellent ones, and in both countries as well as Italy there are some good male-voice choirs, but whenever and wherever boys are employed it is safe to say that the tone is raucous and horrible. In America things are little better. A few mixed-voice choirs there are, who sing quite well, but the usual thing is a paid quartet (or double quartet at most) of which the individual voices are generally good, but the blend and balance is as a rule as bad as when the four star soloists in a "Messiah" performance regale us with "For as in Adam."

There are many things we might learn from the continent and America, but choir-boy training is not one of them. It is safe to say that the best boys' singing in the world is to be found in the English cathedrals and the larger parish churches, and Anglican cathedral organists can hold their own as executants with any of their continental *confreres*. Moreover, the cathedrals, collegiate chapels, and more important parish churches are better equipped and endowed as to their music than any similar institutions abroad. Even the organist of St. John Lateran in Rome (the largest basilica in the world) receives only what would be thought a pittance in this country. And since the number of church musicians outside the pale of the Church of England is small, it follows that Anglican establishments get the pick of front-rank men.

Having said all this, we may now turn to the actual music performed.

Church music in Great Britain may be roughly divided into three types: Nonconformist, Anglican, and Catholic.

In the first-named type one may ("without prejudice," as the lawyers say) include the Church of Scotland, since the music (like that in English Nonconformist places of worship) is mainly confined to metrical psalms and hymns. The Church of England is the largest religious body; Nonconformists come next; and Catholics in point of numbers are a mere handful of the entire population.

I.—CATHOLIC MUSIC.

ANY importance which Catholic music may possess is due not to excellence in performance but to the fact that to the Latin Rite the greatest composers of all ages and countries have contributed. One would naturally think that with such a unique repertoire we would be given constant opportunities of hearing it. This is not the case. In the first place, the Catholic body in England is not a rich one, and consequently many churches which would willingly perform the church classics are unable to pay for the luxury. In other churches where money is forthcoming, the choirs are wedded to a particular style, which they are wont to term "the Good Old Catholic Masses"—in other words, the Viennese school of Haydn, Mozart and their imitators. The vogue of this type of music, which is now only heard in Austria (you very rarely hear it in Germany) and English-speaking countries was the creation of an English publisher — Vincent Novello. He issued cheap editions of the Haydn, Mozart, Hummel, Weber Masses, and numbered them according to his fancy, so that in this country one speaks of "Haydn No. 16" or "Mozart No. 12"—terms which are meaningless in the country of their origin. The firm of Novello also published all Webbe's Masses, and these together with the Viennese ones were the staple food of choirs. It mattered little to them that Mozart's delicate gossamer-like accompaniments were brutalised by their transference to the diapasons of the organ. Still less did it seem to matter that parts were often missing (I myself have heard "Haydn's Imperial" sung without any altos or tenors).

The main thing seemed to be that it was "up to" the choir to stick to "the Good Old Catholic Masses." So strong a hold did this idea take in Britain (I mean, the idea that the Viennese type of Mass was the normal and correct one) that when Protestant musicians wrote Masses (as many of them did) they all followed the Viennese type. What they did not know, and what Catholics had forgotten, was that this type of Mass rode roughshod over every rubric that mattered. The so-called "Good Old Catholic Masses" were "good" music if written by a Mozart, but they were not so very "old" (they only came in with Vincent Novello) and they certainly were not "Catholic" either in form, structure or origin. I know this statement always comes as a shock to the ordinary Catholic organist or choirman, but the historical facts are plain enough.* When the custom grew of performing sacred cantatas in the Lutheran Church, the Latin portions of the Mass were often used as the text. The Gloria and Credo in particular were divided up into separate numbers, and the words assigned to the priest alone at the beginning of each, were now sung by the choir. Thus arose the musical form which Lutherans termed *Missa brevis*; a term entirely different in meaning from the Roman use of the same expression. The Roman *Missa brevis* meant one of two things: (*a*) a short Mass, or (*b*) a Mass in which the Breve was the *Tactus* or time-unit of the music (*cf.* Palestrina's *Missa brevis*, which is certainly not a short Mass). With Lutherans, however, *Missa brevis* meant that the Latin Kyrie and Gloria were treated together in the form of a cantata. By the time of Bach this custom appears to have been established, and the mighty B minor Mass was the result.

From the Lutheran point of view there was nothing to be said against this symphonic treatment of "the Ordinary of the Mass." As a musical form it was gorgeous, and it violated no liturgical laws.

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But in the Roman rite it was wholly contrary to the law which (1) forbids the "Accentus" of the Mass to be sung or said by anyone save the priest; (2) it unduly prolonged the "Concentus" (*i.e.* the portion to be sung by the choir) at such vital points as the Sanctus, and (3) it treated the verbal text (chiefly in the matter of omissions and repetitions) in an arbitrary manner contrary to the rubrics on the subject.

This particular treatment of the music of the Mass was never heard of until the time of Luther. But such glory did Bach give to the symphonic form that in the eighteenth century Haydn and Mozart—fascinated by its possibilities—adopted it. Such a thing was not difficult in those days. Ecclesiastical discipline was almost a dead letter in the ducal or grand-ducal establishments for which Haydn and his successors wrote their Masses. Their princely patrons kept a stud of opera singers and players, who were turned loose into the church on Sundays, to perform music identical in character with that which had occupied them during the week in the Opera House. When a Mozart wrote the Bach type of symphonic Mass, no one in that easy-going age worried about its breaches of liturgical laws. It was a fine "musical programme," and that was all that mattered. Other composers in other countries fell under the spell, till eventually this unliturgical form of Mass came to be regarded as the normal type.

Owing to the enterprise of Messrs. Novello in extending the range of their cheap editions of Haydn, Mozart, Weber, Hummel, etc., this Lutheran type of Mass-music came into all but universal use in English-speaking countries. Later on, the luscious works of Gounod were added, and enjoyed a similar vogue. In the late 'sixties and early 'seventies, a strong movement began in Germany against these unliturgical masses, and other church music of a like character, and the *Caecilienverein* was formed with the object of providing music of a more liturgical and less frivolous nature. (The writer dealt

with this subject in several issues of the *Musical Times*, beginning August, 1915, and traced the history of the *Caecilienverein* from its admirable beginnings to its degeneration into a commercial concern.) Conferences were held all over Germany, and a few English visitors were so fired with enthusiasm for the laudable objects of the Society, that from that day onwards they constituted themselves an advance guard of militant propagandists on behalf of the music produced by the *Caecilienverein*, and largely owing to their efforts, but partly due to the acute business instincts of German firms, this country was flooded with music belonging to what was grandiosely termed "The Cecilian School." Unfortunately, none of these enthusiasts were musicians, and since they possessed no technical knowledge of music they boosted with equal fervour both good music and crude amateur stuff. As Germany had then a reputation with us for scholarship, everything published by the *Caecilienverein* was labelled "scholarly" by our propagandists. As a matter of fact this Cecilian music is invariably dull, barren and uninspired; and the bulk of it (written by petty schoolmasters and local organists) is amateurish to the last degree. Whatever might be said about the unliturgical Lutheran type of Mass (Haydn, Mozart, etc.) at any rate it was *music*: the Cecilian compositions were not. Just as Anglicans have divided themselves into two camps on the subject of chanting, so were Catholics divided into two camps on the subject of Mass music. Furious press controversies ensued, and the usual catchwords and cliches were freely banded about. Each "cause" was in the wrong hands. As the partisans of the Viennese School had no liturgical knowledge, and the Potsdam Party had no musicianship, the bewildered choirmaster might well wonder (like Pilate) where truth was to be found. Amongst all this strife of tongues the question of efficiency in performance never seemed to be so much as mentioned. If you belonged to the Viennese School you screamed Haydn and Mozart, and if you had no altos or tenors,

that didn't matter. You could always blaze away the louder on the organ. If you belonged to the "scholarly" German party, you purchased some Cecilian music; taught it by ear to raw boys and men; and then, without any vocal training whatever, turned the raucous and cacophonous result into church. That has always been the difference between Anglican and Catholic music in this country. The former in its Cathedrals and Parish Churches has a recognised standard of proficiency to which it is the aim of all others to attain. In Catholic Churches no such standard obtained, and the necessity for it not being sufficiently recognised, the choirmaster who attempted anything in the way of training boys was the exception rather than the rule.

And this brings me to a rather curious point. In proportion to their numbers, the Catholic body in this country produces a very large number of competent musicians, but the fact remains that very few indeed of these ever devote themselves to church music. You find Catholics as thick as blackberries in the ranks of orchestral players, on the concert platform, on the operatic stage, as chorus-masters and repetiteurs in opera and so forth; but hardly ever in church. And so it has come about that in a church possessing a repertoire of the finest music of all ages, little of it is ever actually heard, and that little is seldom well performed. This is not altogether the fault of any particular person or persons. It is not so long ago since "Catholic Disabilities" were removed by Act of Parliament, and it took still longer for Catholics to realise that they had emerged from the rigours of the "Penal Times." The earliest churches built in towns were invariably hidden in back streets. To court observation was to court the risk of fortuitous anti-Catholic riots. There was no machinery for carrying on music on adequate lines, and by the time public opinion was sufficiently advanced to tolerate the building of churches in public streets, a certain amateur tradition had been established, which was fatal to any real progress under

the changed conditions. By the time music was firmly fixed as an adjunct of Divine worship, there came along the inevitable controversy as to its type. No one seemed to recognise that it is little use having even the best type if it is inadequately performed. If a quarter of the time spent on controversy had been devoted to choir training, things would have been very different. Adequate Catholic church music can only be produced by a combination of musical and liturgical knowledge. There have been musicians in plenty, and liturgists also, but so far (in this country at least) the two types of mind never seem to have coalesced. Consequently when Pius X issued his *Moto Proprio*, some of its results here were comic and others tragic. Up to that time practically the only forms of music known to English choirmasters were the Viennese-cum-Gounod-cum-Kalliwoda, and the Cecilian. Owing to their lack of liturgical knowledge, they were easily coerced by the Potsdam Party into the belief that obedience to the Pope's wishes meant acceptance of the deadly *Kapellmeistermusik* of the *Caecilienverein*. A number of churches which enjoyed some reputation as exponents of the Viennese School at first made some show of obedience by lavish cuts in the music and some rearrangement of the verbal text, but in a few years even that pretence was abandoned, and they are now going along in the old ruts as though the Pope had never said a word on the subject. The comic aspect was shown in the efforts of other churches of that type to conform without altering their style of music. The German propagandists having more or less established a consensus of opinion that Cecilian music was liturgical and all other music was not, it cannot be wondered if the bulk of choirmasters associated liturgical music with dullness. Consequently, one did not know whether to laugh or weep at press accounts of a performance of music at a well-known London church on the first Sunday after the decree came into force. They sang one of their old Haydn masses exactly as before, but gave it what they considered

was the proper "liturgical" solemnity by doubling the length of every note. The effect of the sprightly "Haydn No. 2" turned into a dirge-like drone is better imagined than described. A few other choirmasters got the idea that the Pope had forbidden everything excepting Plainsong and Palestrina, and (with their little untrained choirs) they attempted both with disastrous effect. One of the most pathetic letters I received was from the choirmistress of a little country church which had hitherto done quite respectable unison music with school-children's voices. She said it would be very hard to give up their accustomed music (and I must say she had taught her school-children to sing it rather well) but they must be obedient to The Holy Father, and would I, therefore, please tell her where the cheapest copies of Palestrina's *Missa Papae Marcelli* were to be bought. Her joy on finding that she had been all along on quite the right lines and was under no necessity of changing, was as great as though I had personally conferred a favour upon her. But there must have been many other equally earnest souls who had no one from whom to ask advice, and who interpreted the Pope's decree in all sorts of strange ways, with chaotic result. At one London Church, in a thickly populated district, they enlisted the services of a "Plainsong expert," who knew as little about the subject as "Plainsong experts" usually do. So terrified were the choir at the dismal strains which they were expected to sing (the "expert" having explained that this was the correct interpretation of Plainsong) that they resigned in a body, and the long-suffering rector and congregation had to grin and bear the raucous caterwauling of a choir of street boys collected by the "expert" to sing what he called Plainsong. The congregation thinking that all this meant obedience to the Pope, endured it stoically for a long time; but human nature would have its way, and on the occasion of the Jubilee of the rector's priesthood, they obtained permission to include in the festivities a solemn Mass of Thanksgiving, at which the old choir could for

once return as a mark of respect and devotion to their beloved pastor. As the Mass was not held on a Sunday, they did not consider it disobedience to the *Moto Proprio* to sing some of the lively old music that they loved so well. They gathered together quite a good orchestra, and two very excellent professional singers. The Mass was Gounod, and wishing to have something equally jolly which the two professional ladies could sing as an "offertory piece," they turned to the evergreen Rossini's "Stabat Mater." And so, with delightfully unconscious humour, the dear old rector's Jubilee was celebrated to the lilting refrain of *Quis est homo qui non fleret?*

I have confined my remarks to Mass music because nowadays there is little else to talk about. The Catholic Directory shows that whereas in the 'sixties Vespers or Compline were sung every Sunday in nearly every church in London, now (although the number of churches is quadrupled) those which sing Vespers can be counted on one's fingers. Throughout the country, with very few exceptions, Vespers and Compline have been superseded by popular devotions in English followed by Benediction, at which the Litany of Loreto is the rule, and motets of any kind the exception. Why this particular litany should rouse composers and choirs to their most meretricious flights no one can tell, but the fact remains that the average setting of the litany is the most trivial thing one hears in church music nowadays. On the Continent, especially in France, there is a considerable reform going on in this respect, but over here things still go on in their old ruts.

Another hindrance to reform in Catholic church music has been the stupid controversies which have raged around Plainsong. When Pustet, the German publisher, by astute, sharp practice, obtained in 1870 a thirty years' monopoly of printing Plainsong books, the German propagandists made great play with the assertion that his edition was official, and obligatory on all congregations. As a matter of fact it was a bungled rechauffé of

the spurious Medicean text edited by Dr. F. X. Haberl and now universally discredited. Many churches out of loyalty took up this "Ratisbon Chant," but the result was so dismal that in a multitude of cases they abandoned the singing of Plainsong altogether. Others "on the side of the angels" adopted the Plainsong books of the monks of Solesmes, which (when legal opinion was sought on the subject) they found they were perfectly at liberty to do. They had to endure the fierce attacks of the Potsdam Party who did not fear to describe them as disloyal Catholics. When — under Pope Pius X — the official Vatican Edition of Plainsong appeared (abolishing the Ratisbon and discomfiting the German Propagandists) there was a universal desire to adopt it in churches. But like all other good movements this one carried in its wake the usual number of charlatan hangers-on,—always anxious to be on the crest of every new wave. The numbers of text-books on elementary Plainsong issued by nonentities was legion, and while the whole thing was sorting itself out, there was little time left for such practical considerations as choir training.

One thing remains to be noted concerning Catholic music, and that is vernacular hymnology, which is about as bad as it could possibly be. Congregational singing has never received the attention which it receives in Catholic churches on the Continent, the institution of the Folk-Mass never having been encouraged in this country. In view of the publication in recent years of simple music in unison with the title "Folk-Mass" it is perhaps necessary to say what a Folk-Mass really is. It is not (as these publications seem to imply) a simple setting of the Mass for congregations to sing. The term really means a Low Mass—said and not sung by the celebrant, during the progress of which the congregation in the body of the church sings appropriate vernacular hymns. The thrilling effect of this congregational singing will be familiar to all who have travelled in the Rhine provinces of Germany for instance. The nearest approach to it in

this country is the Children's Mass on Sunday mornings. Although there is considerable scope for vernacular singing at the popular devotions which have supplanted Vespers and Compline, one generally finds that congregations cling to some half-a-dozen hymns of a fatuous type. In the days of Webbe and Vincent Novello, when the Embassy Chapels in London were almost the only places where a musical service was attempted, there would appear to have been a small but effective supply of diatonic tunes. The advent of Faber changed all this. He wrote hymns voluminously, and fostered vernacular hymn-singing to tunes of a "popular" but inferior musical type. These tunes gradually spread throughout the country to the detriment of real solid hymn-singing. A curious fact in this connexion may be noted. John Wesley (or at any rate some of his immediate successors) took a fancy to some of the Catholic tunes sung in the Webbe period; they made constant use of them in Wesleyan services, where they have been used ever since. When these tunes were ousted from Catholic churches by the saccharine strains of Faber, we had the strange result of tunes originally Catholic becoming unknown in the church of their origin, and confined for many years exclusively to Wesleyan hymn books. But perhaps the worst atrocity committed by Faber was his attempt to "play up to" Ireland by writing a hymn to the jig known as "St. Patrick's Day." Needless to say this hymn has never been sung in Ireland, but it has gradually become a favourite with Irish members of English congregations, who regard it as something specially Irish. Such a hold has it obtained that even the compilers of the Westminster Hymnal did not venture to scrap it. Their private opinion, however, is possibly expressed in a note by the musical editor to the effect that: "Criticism of this tune is disarmed by the fact that Faber wrote his words for it." Just as there have grown up several generations passionately devoted to the Protestant Masses of the Viennese School, which they call "the

good old Catholic Masses," so two generations have grown up passionately devoted to the inanities of Faber's period, which they call "the good old Catholic tunes." Of course, the answer to this is that they are not good, they are not old, and they are not always Catholic. When hymn books began to be printed, the one which obtained the greatest vogue was "The Crown of Jesus," a deplorable amateur compilation which broke with every tradition of vernacular hymn-singing both in this country and on the Continent. A few good tunes found their way in by accident, but the majority were little adapted scraps from such things as Beethoven's pianoforte sonatas, or operatic tit-bits. The accompaniments (generally arpeggios conceived in terms of the pianoforte) were something to make a musician weep. On this deplorable tradition at least two generations of Catholics were reared. In 1898 a hymn book was published which for the first time showed the hand of the musician in its harmonies, but as an Anglican review of it truly stated, the tunes were of the sentimental Victorian type which they (Anglicans) were trying to eliminate from their hymn books. I know of only a very few churches where any attempt is being made to get back to good tunes with a diatonic tradition. But wherever this experiment has been tried it has shown that congregations are not devoted to the old bad tunes as is generally supposed, and where they formerly sang the Faber tunes listlessly, they now sing church-like ones with spirit and energy. It is possible that this particular movement may be the beginning of a reform with far-reaching effect, and that at least one form of bad church music may in time be eliminated.

II.—ANGLICAN MUSIC.

HERE one is confronted with almost ideal conditions for the practice of good music. The musical establishments of the Anglican Church—cathedrals, collegiate chapels, and the leading parish churches—are better equipped in

the matter of funds than similar institutions in any other part of the world. The cathedrals can afford to pay salaries which ensure the pick of the best church singers. The organists of these institutions belong to a type which, if sometimes equalled abroad, has not been surpassed. The clergy are drawn mainly from the older Universities, and from these Universities almost every cathedral organist has received his degree (most of them in Arts as well as Music). It will thus be seen that Anglican establishments have all along been in the full stream of the intellectual life of the country, mainly through their close connexion with the Universities—a connexion denied to all other denominations until a generation ago. Unhampered by financial considerations, or educational limitations, there is no achievement in the realm of church music that is beyond their resources.

There is no need to go into ancient history for remote causes of bad music. The columns of the *Church Times* alone will furnish sufficient evidence of the sloth and slovenliness into which musical services had fallen previous to the Oxford Movement. This movement brought with it increased care and reverence in the conduct of the services, as much on their musical side as on any other. But zeal and musical efficiency are of little account unless combined with high musical taste, without which one cannot expect perfect results. The musical taste of the mid-Victorian period was deplorably low, and was reflected in the compositions produced to meet the new musical needs of Anglican churches. There was a natural revolt against the old type of cathedral service, where vain repetitions of commonplace phrases were punctuated by cadences every four or eight bars. The writers of the new type of service and anthem (Dykes, Barnby, and their contemporaries) were certainly highly equipped musicians, but their taste was of the sentimental Victorian type then prevalent. Their music proved a welcome relief from the arid compositions which it supplanted, but the fact remains that, while musical England has

grown out of the feeble sentimentalities of the Victorian era, these particular services and anthems obtained such a firm hold in the church, that they are still sung, and this sentimental type (the legacy of Dykes and Barnby) has managed to "dig itself in" so firmly that up to the present neither the corporate efforts of the Church Music Society nor the self-sacrificing ones of individuals have succeeded in dislodging it. This is particularly noticeable in certain college chapels, where one sees highly educated dons, who would never dream of listening to second rate music at Queen's Hall, listening with complacency to Barnby in E, or Woodward's "The Radiant Morn." One would also expect that cathedral authorities, who are almost without exception men of culture, would show the same concern for historic music as they do for ancient literature. But a careful perusal of cathedral service lists for many years back shows that the services and anthems of Byrd, Tallis, Tye and Gibbons are conspicuous by their absence, and that the mid-Victorian type is rarely absent. I can understand an educated person accounting for the scanty performances of Purcell's music on the ground that it is compositions written for church use rather than church compositions, but I cannot understand its exclusion on the ground that it is "antiquarian music" (as a cathedral dignitary once remarked to me).

The best minds in Anglican circles are fighting this sentimental music tooth and nail, but the fact that their fight is such a tough one only goes to show that once a bad type of music is introduced, it "digs itself in" only too effectively. This has been painfully illustrated in the history of "Hymns Ancient and Modern." The Oxford Movement created a desire for hymnology of a warmer and less formal type than had previously obtained, and the late 'sixties produced the first edition of a book more in conformity with the taste of the time. Along with many new tunes of conspicuous merit, there were others of the sentimental kind with which subsequent editions

of the book have familiarised us. A further disastrous concession to mid-Victorian taste was the elimination of rhythm from all the old tunes, which then became a mere procession of minims. The book sold like wildfire, and if the Dykes and Barnby service crystallised the sloppy sentimental mid-Victorian standard of taste, "Hymns Ancient and Modern" further consolidated it. It set a fashion which was followed by every other hymn book (Nonconformist as well as Anglican), and for anything like virility in hymnology we had to wait until the advent of the "English Hymnal." The most ironical feature of the situation is that when the Committee of "Hymns Ancient and Modern" attempted to retrieve their error by issuing (in 1904) a really fine edition, it was received with howls of indignation from the sentimentalists, and fell dead from the Press. But the 1904 edition is the type to which Anglicans will have to return if virility is again to be the mark of their hymnology.

But if Anglican vernacular hymnology is a case of lost opportunities, equally so is Plainsong. That Plainsong has a rightful place in religious worship is conceded by most rational people. But the revival of Plainsong (up to the present) has been exclusively identified with the High Church Party. The Low Church, the Broad Church, and the "Safe" Church have held aloof from it. Consequently instead of being received on its musical merits, it has laboured under the disadvantage of being considered in the light of a party badge. This is unfortunate, but there the facts are, and we have got to accept them. But even as things are, the unbiassed looker-on can see that the High Church Party might have made much more of Plainsong than is the case. One feels that in too many cases those who had taken up Plainsong from antiquarian and theological reasons rather than artistic ones have begun at the wrong end of the stick. The average High Church clergyman who wishes to introduce Plainsong usually begins by singing the psalms to what he calls The Gregorian Tones. To my mind this

is a mistake. Nothing in Plainsong is more difficult than efficiently rendered psalmody. Were I a High Church clergyman, anxious to popularise Plainsong, I should begin with hymns, where the melodies are supremely beautiful and readily appeal to congregations. I should then go on to melismatic chant for introits, alleluias, graduals, offertoria, etc. The very last thing I should ever attempt to foist on a congregation would be Plainsong chants for the psalms, for the simple reason that, being things which everybody thinks he can do, they are in reality the most difficult of all. One can tolerate an indifferently rendered Plainsong hymn or sequence, but badly sung psalms are an offence that cries for vengeance.

I may perhaps be pardoned for referring (in this connexion) to another instance of Anglican lost opportunities. One of the foremost Plainsong authorities in Europe is an Anglican clergyman. Some of the best authorities on Plainsong that I know, in this country, are Anglicans. But in spite of the zeal which I observe in the High Church Party for Plainsong, the services of these real experts seem to me seldom called into requisition. The "Plainsong movement" in the Anglican Church seems to the outside looker-on to be mainly in the hands of eager and half-instructed amateurs, and the experts who might give it distinction are left to work in the seclusion of their studies—for the benefit of posterity no doubt, but certainly not for the immediate benefit of the movement. Speaking as an onlooker, it seems an amazing thing to me that the Anglican Church should possess at any rate one expert, whose name is held in honour in continental Plainsong circles, and yet who is regarded in his native country with complacent toleration. To this modest retiring scholar I owe more than I can say in my own Plainsong studies, and I am also in a position to add that he is not a mere antiquary, whose hobby happens to be Plainsong, but a sound musician in every other respect, thoroughly conversant with the latest developments of modern music. So long as Anglican

Plainsong remains in the hands of pinchbeck professors, and Anglicans are content to relegate their real experts to the study, so long will outsiders hesitate to believe in the sincerity of the "Plainsong movement"—at any rate from the artistic point of view.

For an onlooker like myself to enter upon any criticism of so well-established an institution as the Anglican Chant, would be more or less impertinent. The thing is a purely domestic affair, and one can only note signs of revolt against it on the part of Anglicans themselves—notably a paper, by so eminent an authority as Dr. C. W. Pearce, on "The Futility of the Anglican Chant." I, therefore, say nothing whatever about the chant itself, but concerning its application to the psalms, I may perhaps be permitted one or two remarks. (1) Even granting that as an artistic form of music it is unsatisfactory (as Dr. Pearce says), it can be made very effective in the hands of a good choir. (2) No matter how effective it may be rendered under those conditions, its rendering on the part of a bad choir must always be horrible. These two postulates granted, we have to consider its effect in village churches with inefficient choirs. The first thing that occurs to the outsider who drops into a village church is the contrast between the glorious prose of the Prayer Book and the little niggling piffling effect of it rendered to feeble tunes by raucous-voiced yokels. The passion for "choral services" which followed on the Oxford Movement has taken out of village church services much of their former simple dignity. The prose version of the psalms in "The Book of Common Prayer" is almost the noblest English that can be conceived. Recited in the speaking voice, as it used to be in old days, it has a dignity incomparable. Take for example:

> He rode upon the cherubims, and did fly: he came flying upon the wings of the wind.
>
> He made darkness his secret place: his pavilion round about him with dark water, and thick clouds to cover him.

At the brightness of his presence his clouds removed: hailstones, and coals of fire.

The Lord also thundered out of heaven, and the Highest gave his thunder: hail-stones, and coals of fire.

He sent out his arrows, and scattered them: he cast forth lightnings, and destroyed them.

Or this:

O my God, make them like unto a wheel: and as the stubble before the wind;

Like as the fire that burneth up the wood: and as the flame that consumeth the mountains.

Persecute them even with thy tempest: and make them afraid with thy storm.

Make their faces ashamed, O Lord: that they may seek thy Name.

Let them be confounded and vexed ever more and more: let them be put to shame, and perish.

Or again the glorious sweep of the following:

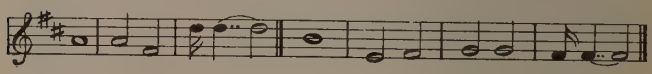
Man is like a thing of nought: his time passeth away like a shadow.

Bow thy heavens, O Lord, and come down: touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.

Cast forth thy lightning, and tear them: shoot out thine arrows, and consume them.

Send down thine hand from above: deliver me, and take me out of the great waters, from the hand of strange children:

If recited, nothing can destroy their glorious diction, but now that village choirs have taken to aping the performances of cathedrals, we have this splendid prose harnessed to smug and complacent metres like this:



The prose of the Prayer Book, like that of the "Authorised Version" of the Bible, is something so dignified that

only the highest type of music can adequately express it. Why then desecrate it by paltry tunes? The sooner village choirs learn that the prose of the Prayer Book is infinitely greater than any musical attempts of theirs could ever be, the sooner will be removed a practice which is an offence to all educated and religious-minded people. Church music was never intended to belittle gorgeous poetry or prose. Where it cannot enhance either, the poetry or prose ought to be allowed to speak for itself. But this is just the sort of thing which the rustic choir seems unable to comprehend.

III.—NONCONFORMIST MUSIC.

THIS section of my subject is a little difficult to write about since Nonconformist music is normally confined to metrical psalms and hymns in the vernacular. In quite a number of Nonconformist Churches it is now customary to sing anthems as well, and in many Wesleyan places of worship the Morning Service of the Church of England is used with its usual musical accompaniment. The churches which use anthems and liturgical services are in the minority and the musician is bound to notice with regret that the type of anthem which finds most favour is usually of the sentimental mid-Victorian type.

A certain proportion of the churches possessing good organs make a great feature of organ recitals before or after services. These are usually extremely well done, but, of course, they are more in the nature of accessories to public worship than constituent parts of it.

Although hymnology is a very limited branch of music it is by no means an unimportant one. To hear a whole congregation singing a hymn-tune with fervour is a very inspiring thing. But from the very fact that each tune must be repeated a great number of times it is essential that the tune should be a strong one if it is not to cloy on the palate. How far then is this true of present-day Nonconformist hymns? I am afraid that a study of the later editions of Nonconformist hymn-books is a saddening

one for the musician. The hymn-books of nearly every Nonconformist denomination show a regrettable departure from the strong diatonic tunes which served their forefathers and a multiplication of weak sentimental four-part songs in imitation of "Hymns Ancient and Modern."

Of course, it would be a gross impertinence on my part to criticise Nonconformist hymns from any other standpoint than a musical one. Nonconformity has a great heritage of strong diatonic tunes reaching as far back as the Protestant Reformation in Germany and Switzerland. Even if there were not sufficient good tunes of British origin, there are easily accessible volumes of continental ones which would admirably fulfil their purpose. If any reader is sufficiently curious to know where these are to be found he need only consult the admirable papers read before the Musical Association in the years 1905 and 1918 by the Rev. G. R. Woodward. He would then acquire something of a critical acquaintance with the German and Genevan Psalters and make the acquaintance of the finest Protestant tunes of all ages. With such a storehouse of musical wealth ready to hand, which is moreover essentially Protestant in character, it is a subject of astonishment to every musician that Nonconformists of to-day should turn their backs on such a noble musical heritage which is all their own, and find satisfaction in feeble copies of sentimental Anglican tunes which every educated Anglican musician of to-day is doing his best to eliminate. The present proprietors of "Hymns Ancient and Modern" realised the mischief which these sentimental tunes in the earlier editions of their book had done, and brought out a really fine edition in 1904. From this edition the worst of the sentimental tunes were eliminated, and the new tunes were distinguished by their dignified diatonic character, but (as I have said before) the mischief was already done and congregations would have nothing to say to the new edition. I fear a similar mischief has already been done

in Nonconformist hymn-books. But there is no reason why it should be irreparable. If Nonconformists have the courage to eschew imitations of Anglican music at its worst period and return once more to their own hymn tunes, it will be a fine thing for their music. Already there are signs of such a reform in Wales. Let us hope it will spread to the east of Offa's Dyke.

ORGANS AND CHOIRS

POSSIBLY on account of its ecclesiastical associations it seems to be considered as sacrilegious to criticise the organ as to speak disrespectfully of the Equator. But seeing how the war has altered our viewpoint in every detail of life, I do not see how we can regard organs and organists as any longer immune from criticism. In the realm of secular music the most casual observer cannot fail to notice that an enormous amount of talk on the subject of Church Music is always going on, nor can he fail to wonder—since this is so—at the further fact that the standard of performance in churches is very far below that which would be tolerated in any other musical walk of life. This is not to say that we have not front rank performers in church. As a matter of fact our best organists can more than hold their own with the best of any other country. It is not of them I speak. That the average church performance is dull and uninspired will not, I think, be disputed; but in all our debates and musical correspondences on the subject, I doubt if we ever really face the reasons for this. One no doubt is that the salary of the average organist is in no sense a living wage and he has, therefore, to accept the alternative of starvation or having his finer musical senses blunted by the drudgery of teaching. But the chief factor to my mind seems to be that from the very nature of things the organist is compelled to play second and third rate music whether he likes it or not. The number of church compositions which can be called classics is small. The output (dating from last century) to meet increased musical needs is very large, but, with the exception of Wesley and Walmisley, how much is there of it to which we could ask the intelligent foreigner to listen as a specimen of first-rate music? We may begin by disliking second-rate music, but constant repetition is bound to blunt our finer perceptions, and in some cases to

convert mere toleration of it into actual liking. Since there is no remedy in Church Music for this state of things, clearly it must be sought for outside. How many organists do seek for it outside? How many are ever to be seen at an orchestral concert, or at the Opera? One can understand the pianoforte teacher worn out with his day's drudgery shunning the pianoforte recital. But what is difficult to understand is that opera and orchestral concerts should not be found a relief from and a stimulus after pianoforte drudgery. Another thing that makes for dullness is the limited amount of genuine organ literature, though one cannot help feeling that even the classics which are accessible are not utilised to their fullest extent. As a result the organist must fall back on "arrangements." None but a pedant would object to arrangements, but it is in the performance of them that the limitations of the organist are most apparent. For example, one of the most popular arrangements to-day is Sibelius's "Finlandia," but I have seldom heard anything better than a dull rendering of it for the obvious reason that the player had never heard it on the orchestra, and was, therefore, unable to give anything like orchestral colouring to it. Until organists as a body make themselves acquainted with other branches of music than their own, so long will they remain a class apart from the full tide of musical life, and so long will their performances be stereotyped and negligible.

In saying all this I am not overlooking the difficulties in the way of their acquiring a general wider knowledge of music, nor am I criticising them adversely. I am only stating the facts as they must appear to any unbiassed looker-on, and this groove into which organists have fallen is not without its effect on the instrument itself. In the early days of renewed activity in church music, organ builders brought their art up to a high pitch of perfection. But it is fairly safe to say that for over thirty years the church organ has remained where Willis left it. With the advent of the cinema and the increase of the

concert organ (in America at least) one is beginning to see the birth of original ideas in organ construction. We may sniff at the cinema organ to-day, but the time is not far off when it will no longer be a negligible factor. To begin with, is it likely that competent organists will devote themselves in the future to church work which does not provide a living wage, when they can secure anything from £300 to £500 a year at the cinema and still have their mornings and afternoons free? The field offered at the cinema even now for organists of good technique and some imagination is a very important one. It stimulates their perceptions instead of blunting them. An exclusive round of Brown in B flat, Jones in A or Robinson in F is bound to result in musical atrophy.

I am not going to be so presumptuous as to suggest offhand where the remedy for all this is to be found, but pass on to another aspect of the matter which gives me no little concern. In the course of a varied experience as adjudicator at Competition Festivals I have been struck with (and sometimes amazed at) the extraordinary development in the technique of choirs. But I must hasten to add that these choirs are drawn from schools, factories, or local organisations. The church choir classes are usually the most unsatisfactory of all and the least enterprising. In large towns there is the keenest competition between different choral bodies, and the sporting spirit shown is exhilarating, but I have sometimes had the experience of finding that in a large town with large churches and large choirs there has not been one entry for church choir singing. Whether this is due to self-satisfaction, or inertia, or the fear of competing against each other, I do not pretend to know; but at any rate it does not exhibit a strikingly sporting spirit. On the other hand I find village church choirs,—on whom these town ones would no doubt look down with contempt,—amongst the most sporting of the competitors. Recently I had before me from one little village in Cheshire no less than 21 entries, which included solos, quartets,

secular choruses for male, female and mixed voices, and church anthems. I only mention this to show what can be done when the spirit of enterprise is present. There is no doubt that these Festival Competitions are a fair indication of the state of music throughout the country, and, in the light of what they reveal, organ playing is at a low ebb. I invariably find that the organ classes are the most disappointing, the standard of the actual playing is below that of the pianoforte classes; and in such matters as accuracy, registration, and phrasing, the results can only be described as deplorable.* The object of these remarks is to state facts rather than to criticise. Unless readers are more apathetic than I take them to be, I am assuming that plenty of criticism will be offered both on the subject itself and also on my impertinence in bringing it forward. In anticipating this may I urge in mitigation that I write in no censorious spirit, and that I am keenly alive to the great difficulties attending the profession of a church organist. It is the system that is wrong; organists are the victims and not the authors of it. Discussion on that assumption cannot fail to be profitable. On any other lines it will be irrelevant.

**Writing about an important Competition Festival held in one of our largest cities, Mr. Ernest Newman once expressed his inability to say whether the registration of the organ competitors most resembled the bagpipes or a dog fight.*

CHURCH MUSIC AND POPULAR FALLACIES

TO anyone who has given serious attention to the study of Church music there is always an element of hopelessness in Press discussions on the subject. Writers of articles, and casual correspondents alike deliver themselves of the most amazing and bewildering contradictions. Small wonder, therefore, that the plain man who dislikes inconclusive squabbles (since irrelevant and inconclusive argument usually means that there is really nothing serious to argue about) decides that the whole subject is unimportant, and is only a matter of individual taste.

The man with knowledge of any particular subject takes contradiction calmly, because he *knows* whether his opponent is talking reason or not. The man with scanty knowledge is intolerant of other people's opinion, and intemperate in the expression of his own. It is this second type of controversialist that specially flourishes in most "Church music" discussions. Why? Just because in all quarters there is so scanty a stock of real knowledge concerning Church music—its origin, its history, its functions, its religious and æsthetic import. Again, why?

While not blind to a number of inherent causes (which need not be specified here), I am inclined to place the chief blame at the door of the musical text-books. They are responsible for the perpetration and perpetuation of such a cloud of fictions that the whole historical outlook has been befogged and obscured. The first step towards any fruitful discussion of Church music must be in the direction of clearing the air historically. Text-book fictions must be nailed to the counter, and shown up for the ridiculous hotch-potch that they are—(as mixed as my metaphors in fact).

It is no reproach to the well-informed man to say that his wide general knowledge is derived rather from the text-book than from the treatise. Nowadays life is too

short, leisure too scanty, and business too absorbing for him to go to original sources for anything outside his special work. All he asks is that his text-books should be reliable, accurate, and (above all) up-to-date. And so they are, with the lamentable exception of musical history. The scientific text-book of to-day is written by the expert with original research behind him, but in musical history the compiler and the hack still hold the monopoly.

The past twenty-five years have seen the uprooting of the musical landmarks that sufficed for our grandparents; the scientific study and revival of the ancient Plainsong from the original manuscripts; the restoration and publication of the texts of the Polyphonic period; the arrival of the modern French and Russian schools; all have contributed to alter most profoundly the placid musical outlook of former days, but the current popular text-books contain no indication that such things have happened. With a few honourable exceptions, no English expert appears to have attempted for popular musical history what men of science have achieved in their department. Text-books go on repeating each other, and we are really no further ahead than in the days of Burney and Hawkins. Especially is this the case with regard to ancient music. The foreigner who writes a musical text-book usually shows an acquaintance with the literature of all countries on his particular subject; the English text-book compiler ignores the treatises of even his fellow-countrymen.

Wooldridge in "The Oxford History of Music" and Stainer in "Dufay and his contemporaries" and "Early Bodleian Music," have made the Polyphonic period live again, but English text-books are silent on their researches. Though Wooldridge and Stainer have sufficiently demonstrated the necessity of at least a working acquaintance with early mensurable music (if one is rightly to understand the period) the revised Grove's "Dictionary" was content to reprint the obscure, chaotic, forty-years-old articles of Rockstro on the subject, and to confine to

biography writing at least one scholar who could have done it justice.*

The professional man of letters or science derives his knowledge at first hand from original sources. The "general practitioner" in music usually derives his from the text-book alone. If he is ill-informed; if his outlook is narrow and cramped; if he lacks the historical sense, can we blame him? Rather let us blame the institutions that examined him for his diplomas, on the strength of text-books which ought long ago to have gone to the scrap-heap. The trouble is that while text-books in every other branch of knowledge keep pace with research, those of music lag sorely behind, and it is little wonder if men of science, and art, continue to regard musical affairs as beneath their serious attention. This attitude of mind has had farther-reaching effects than might be supposed. To give but one instance:

A voluminous literature now exists on the fascinating subject of Provencal poetry. Modern versifiers have made *Kyrielle*, *Rondeau*, *Triolet*, and *Chant Royal* live again in our vernacular, and this revived interest has extended to the whole Troubadour period. Much research has been expended on it from the purely literary point of view, to the exclusion of the one factor that gives it vitality,—the music. It is no exaggeration to say that not until Pierre Aubry and Jean Beck reconstructed these Troubadour melodies did the literary researchers begin to realise how they had been working themselves into a *cul de sac*. The Troubadour poet was also the Troubadour musician. His music and his verses were not independent, but interdependent, and it has proved to be a faulty scholarship that would separate the two.

But one can hardly blame the literary man. The musical text-books had told him that while ecclesiastical music of that period was "hide-bound with rigid and

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* *At the time of writing, another revision of Grove is in progress which will, doubtless, be free from this defect.*

mechanical rules," the Troubadour and Minnesinger—"casting theories to the winds—sang their wood-notes wild," spontaneously, as the spirit moved them, "unfettered by academic rules." And text-book compilers are to-day still repeating this fiction, just as though Wagner's deadly satire ("Die Meistersinger") had never been written.

English "grown-ups," whose childhood's memories are green, still remember with glee the discussion between the entertainer "Lieutenant" Cole and a female member of his "Wooden-Headed Family," as to whether or not the latter "was sittin' on a nail"; and how the rude "Joey" clinched the argument with: "Well, Mister Cole, *she* ought to know." One can imagine the man of letters poring over a manuscript of Piere Vidal, or Colin Muset; scrutinising the strange dots and scratches over the verses (in the same spirit as Lord Randolph Churchill, when he was confronted with decimal points in some Treasury statistics, and made his historic inquiry as to the meaning of "those damned dots") and saying: "These things look like notes; there seems to be some method in their arrangement"; but the text-book man says that in music the Troubadours were "unfettered by rules," and I suppose *he* ought to know.

The truth is that the Troubadour was just as "hide-bound by rules" as was "the monkish composer," on whom the text-book writer loves to pour his scorn. The Troubadour's art displayed every bit as much "academic pedantry" as did that of the church musician. If the text-book compiler is right in saying that the Polyphonic school of Church music came to an end because of the pedantry which "attached more importance to the ingenuity of a composition than to its beauty," his remark applies with equal force to the Troubadours. If not, where lies the point of Wagner's "Meistersinger"?

Is it not time we scrapped the text-book fiction that in those days "the Church possessed all the science of music, and the secular minstrels all the art"? The real facts are,

that just as the Church had her schools of Chant, so the secular singers had their schools of Minstrelsy. Even the Jongleur (Ishmael among his fellows), in addition to being skilled in singing and playing, had as sound a theoretical equipment as his ecclesiastical brother. The notation of the Troubadour songs did not fix the duration of notes any more than did that of the Church. To sing from it demanded a thorough knowledge of the complexities of the Rhythmic Modes, and in this respect both churchmen and minstrel alike had to be experts.

Is it not time, too, that we scrapped the popular fiction that the (miscalled) "Ecclesiastical" Modes were the exclusive creation and property of the Church; that St. Ambrose invented the authentic ones, and St. Gregory the Plagal; and that "it was decreed that upon one or the other of these scales all church melodies should henceforth be constructed"? Is it not time someone informed us that *Organum* and *Descant* are not one and the same thing; that it was not di Lasso who "introduced the chromatic element into musical composition, as well as such musical terms as Allegro and Adagio"; that Palestrina did not "transfer the *cantus firmus* or principal melody of a composition from the tenor part, where it had hitherto invariably been placed (!), to the soprano or highest part" (in other words, place the tune on the top); that it is contrary to fact to state that "Spain never had . . . a distinctive school of her own"; that it was not early Belgian composers who "divided counterpoint into five principal methods or 'species' "; that "*falso bordone* when written was" not "always placed *under* the Plainsong"; that "the folk-songs of the Troubadours" is a contradiction in terms, since Troubadours did not sing folk-songs? Is it not time we ceased to believe that "it is seldom that the whole of the *Dies Irae* is included in a Requiem, as the performance of . . . every verse would be wearisome"; that "many Gregorian hymn-tunes are in use at the present day, and it is needless to say that . . . their presence . . . is due, not to their

having been treasured up by the masses, but to the zeal of a few musical antiquarians" (*sic*); that they (Gregorian melodies) have "no distinct tonality—they are, in short, without beginning and without end"? (Forgive me if all these quotations sound silly. I have taken them from text-books on which I was examined in youth, and on which the present unfortunate generation *is still being examined.*)

Is it not time we realised that just as everyone in these days sings and plays in the major and minor scales, so everyone in those days sang and played in the diatonic Modes? The Modes were the musical idiom of that time, just as the scales are the musical idiom of to-day. True, the Church systematised the tonality of the Modes, but modal music as a vehicle of expression was common to the Church and the World alike. The age of chivalry is gone, and with it the modal music of the Troubadours; the Church remains, and with her remains the modal music of her Offices. The Troubadour songs had died out before the advent of the printing press; the Church's songs have survived the age of manuscripts, and continue to be printed and reprinted in every quarter of the globe. To know what the latter sound like one has only to order a Graduale or Vesperale at the nearest bookseller's; to know what the former sounded like—their secrets locked up in musty manuscripts—demands expert knowledge possessed (at present) by few. We can dogmatise about the things we know; we can only speculate about the things we do not know. The text-book writer at least knows what Plainsong sounds like; he dislikes the sound; it holds no charm for him; modern music does. So he dogmatises; and dismisses Plainsong as the crude production of childish old monks who knew no better. He does not know what Troubadour music sounded like; but he knows that it charmed kings and courtiers, brave knights and fair ladies. So he speculates concerning it. To have given such pleasure, he argues, it must have been a beautiful thing—very different from the dull Plainsong which he dislikes so much.

Alas, poor text-book writer. Could he but hear a Troubadour melody side by side with a piece of metrical Plainsong, I doubt much if he would be able to say which was which, unless he were linguist enough to notice that one was in Latin and the other in a Romance dialect. And so, from a piece of sheer ignorance, has grown up the monstrous text-book legend of an essential difference between Troubadour music and Church music, to the discredit of the latter. It is certainly true that there were fundamental differences between the two, only they do not happen to be differences insisted on by the text-books. It is one thing to say (what is the fact) that the difference was one of form, style, and treatment, and quite another to say (as the text-books do) that the difference was between an art work and an academic exercise.

Just as no proper appreciation of the Troubadour period is possible if we separate the study of the lyrics from the study of the music, so no proper understanding of Church music is possible if we separate the study of that music from the study of Liturgy. Liturgy and music grew up together and are as inseparable as were Troubadour lyrics and Troubadour music. The critic who can see "abuse" or "irreverence" in one voice singing "Alleluia" throughout an entire Mass (as does a writer in a back number of the *Contemporary Review* which I have by me) can know nothing of the history of Tropes—those exuberant outbursts of religious fervour. So long as these interpolated ejaculations were of the nature of spontaneous piety the Church tolerated them. When they became systematised, stereotyped, and conventional, legislation stepped in and removed them as excrescences. We may smile at the simple-minded soul who interrupts a revival meeting with "Praise the Lord" and other pious ejaculations, but no reasonable person would question his sincerity, or dignify his "Hallelujahs" with the title of "abuses."

So also, to waste sarcasm (as does the *Contemporary*

Reviewer) on the composer who used "different coloured inks to express different sentiments" (granting that he really did so) is to show a profound unacquaintance with the naïveté of the medieval mind. We may call such simple devices childish. Would it not be truer to call them childlike? And before the text-book critic becomes too severe on the point, it were well to remind him that in many cases it was the colour of the ink which determined the values of the notes: *e.g.* red notes amongst black changed what was formerly *Tempus perfectum* to *Tempus imperfectum*, and *vice versa*.

Again, to sneer (as does the writer above mentioned) at the composer who used Puzzle Canons and other devices to obscure his meaning when simpler and more obvious methods would have sufficed, is to show lamentable ignorance of medieval life and history. Medieval guilds guarded the mysteries of their craft no less jealously than they guarded their civic privileges. Church music-makers were craftsmen, and their object (until quite late times) was not to make their music common property, but to render it intelligible only to the initiate. To say that they purposely made it complex and academic to the exclusion of emotion and feeling, is to misunderstand their habit of mind. In those days, "when all men were religious," the craftsman believed his skill to be the gift of his Creator. To what better purpose—he argued—could he put his skill than by displaying it in the music he wrote for God's service? To him and his listeners it was no "academic exercise," but a rendering back to God of the skill with which God had endowed him.

It is the neglect or ignorance of such matters as these which makes text-book lore on the subject of Church music a travesty bordering on the grotesque. I have specially in mind an excellent series of text-books issued by a leading firm of publishers. Those on harmony, counterpoint, orchestration, etc., are admirably done, but when Church music is the theme one comes across hopeless statements like the following: "From Bach the

motet received a much freer expression. That great master abandoned *to some extent* (italics mine) the *cantus firmus*, and substituted for it the Protestant chorale." That a musician of eminence, as was the author (except in history-making), could seriously write this — when every sound student of music knows that long before the end of the Polyphonic period composers had discarded the exclusive use of the *canto firmo* in favour of original themes—only shows how widespread is the ignorance of musical history, and how urgently it stands in need of the expert historian. The same writer in describing the *Miserere* says, "There are two minor forms (of it), the *Salve Regina* and *Ave verum Corpus*." This is as near the truth as to say "There are two minor forms of the Athanasian Creed, viz. 'God save the King' and 'Yankee Doodle.' "

This is not the place for a study of the development of Church music, but the reader may take it that such a study — in the light of liturgical developments, and general European history—would lead to a complete reversal of text-book judgments.

True, there are one or two weighty indictments that deserve attention, *e.g.* the use of secular songs as *canti fermi*, and the use of even lewd *Chansons* that echoed down cathedral aisles in harmony with the strains of *Kyrie eleison*. But they only emphasise the hackneyed quotation—"The evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones."

The glorious music of the Polyphonic period—of Josquin, Lasso, Palestrina (to say nothing of our own Tye, Tallis, Whyte, and Byrd)—has too long been interred in libraries and museums. Consequently the text-book compiler, knowing next to nothing about its structure, can tell us next to nothing about its beauty. But he has, instead, retailed *ad nauseam* a list of "abuses"—all of them incidental, and most of them of doubtful authenticity. After all, if great composers did write Masses on the tunes of *L'homme arme* and *Les nez rouges*, it

was because they were good tunes, and worthy of such treatment. If lesser composers treated baser songs and baser tunes in like manner, it is only what one would expect lesser men to do. Bad music and bad composers have flourished in every age.

What we want to know is: Did this bad or irreverent music predominate? Did it leave its stamp on the period to a greater degree than did good music? Did it increase to such an extent as to cause the collapse (as the text-book writer says it did) of the Polyphonic school? No one who has made a serious study of the period could possibly answer yes. Even as regards the introduction of lewd songs, I gravely doubt their widespread prevalence. I have come across some instances of their use, but for reasons unnecessary to detail here I accept their presence in musical texts with many qualifications.

Is it not time that we made some serious attempt to become acquainted with the real music of this great period? Let us leave the text-book hack to babble of as many "abuses" as he pleases. Let us take for granted as many of them as he pleases, but do let us go to the literature itself, and form our judgment on that. I have never read a text-book that showed the least acquaintance with it. The critic above quoted gravely stated in the *Contemporary Review* that Palestrina's secular music was negligible, and that he only wrote four madrigals!

It is to be regretted that until a corpus of our great English composers is in print, the text-book compiler may be trusted to continue (uncontradicted) to write nonsense concerning them. But the complete works of Palestrina, Lasso, and Vittoria, and the principal works of the other great Continental composers can now be had in printed form, so there is no excuse for any of the wild writing concerning *them* to which we have been so long accustomed.

The most casual study of the music of the Polyphonic period will show it to be a great period; a period that produced noble and sincere music (as noble and sincere

as has ever been written), and that it was not the text-books man's list of "abuses" that brought it to an end. Its history is simply the threefold story of every other period of art: (1) The evolution of the new art form; (2) The development of this art form until its resources were exhausted; (3) The birth of new art forms, and the passing of the old.

One more popular delusion concerning Church music is that to which I have referred on page 107: I mean the pathetic adhesion to the Lutheran-Viennese type of Mass. When Pius X in his *Motu proprio* recalled Catholic choirs to their duties in this respect, a wail of self-pity arose from English ones at the proposed supersession of what they had come to call "the good old Catholic Masses."

The humour of the situation lies in the fact of Catholic choristers — who would be horrified at the suggestion of countenancing Lutheranism—giving their passionate adherence to a type of Mass-music which in its origin, form and structure, is Lutheran and Protestant.*

**During the years which have elapsed since this essay first appeared in a journal there has been a remarkable output of excellent text-books on music. But the old ones, from which I have quoted, are still on the market and apparently selling as briskly as ever.*

SAILOR SHANTIES

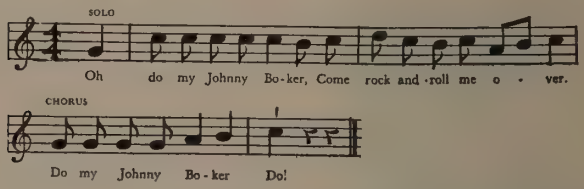
I.

A SHANTY was a labour song, sung by sailors aboard the old sailing ships. Each class of work had its own class of shanty by which the labour was lightened. Sailors sang shanties only when at work; never by way of recreation. Shanties were moreover confined to the merchant service; they were not used aboard men-o'-war, where the work was carried out in silence,—the orders being given to the pipe of the bo'sun's whistle.

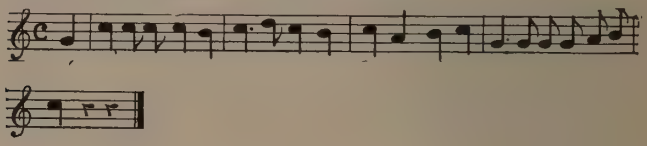
The advent of screw steamers sounded the death knell of the shanty. Aboard the steamer there were practically no sails to be manipulated; the donkey engine and steam winch supplanted the hand-worked windlass and capstan. By the end of the 'seventies steam had driven the sailing ship from the face of the waters. A number of sailing vessels lingered on through the 'eighties, but they retained little of the corporate pride and splendour that was once theirs. The old spirit was gone, never to return.

When the sailing ship ruled the waters and the shanty was a living thing, no one appears to have paid heed to it. To the landsman of those days—before folk-song hunting had begun—the haunting beauty of the tunes would appear to have made no appeal. This may be partly accounted for by the fact that he would never be likely to hear the sailor sing them ashore, and partly because of the Rabelaisian character of the words to which they were sung aboard ship. We had very prim notions of propriety in those days, and were apt to overlook the beauty of the melodies, and to speak of shanties in bulk as "low vulgar songs." Be that as it may, it was not until the early 'eighties—when the shanty was beginning to die out with the sailing ship—that any attempt was made to form a collection. W. L. Alden in *Harper's Magazine*, and James Runciman—in the *St. James' Gazette* and other papers—wrote articles on the subject, and gave

musical quotations. In 1888 Miss L. A. Smith of Newcastle-on-Tyne published *The Music of the Waters*, a thick volume into which was tumbled indiscriminately and uncritically a collection of all sorts of tunes from all sorts of countries which had any connection with seas, lakes, rivers, or their geographical equivalents. Scientific folk-song collecting was not understood in those days, and consequently all was fish that came to the authoress's net. Sailor shanties and landsmen's nautical effusions were jumbled together higgledy-piggledy, along with "Full Fathom Five" and the "Eton boating song." But this lack of discrimination, pardonable in those days, was not so serious as the inability to write the tunes down correctly. So long as they were copied from other song-books they were not so bad. But when it came to taking them down from the seamen's singing the results were deplorable. Had the authoress been able to give us correct versions of the shanties, her collection would have been a valuable one. One example (of what runs all through the book) will be sufficient to show how a lack of the rudiments of music renders valueless what would otherwise have been a document of importance. This is the Tyneside version of "Johnny Boker," one of the best known of all shanties:



Here follows the version of Miss Smith; she gives no words, and entitles it "Johnny *Polka*:



It will be seen that the notes are given correctly, but their respective time values are all wrong, and the barring which this involves makes the version a travesty.

The book contains altogether about thirty-two shanties collected from sailors in the Tyne seaports. Since both Miss Smith and myself hail from Newcastle, her "hunting ground" for shanties was also mine, and I am consequently in a position to assess the importance or unimportance of her work. I may, therefore, say that although hardly a single shanty is noted down correctly, I can see clearly (having myself noted the same tunes, in the same district) what she intended to convey, and furthermore can vouch for the accuracy of some of the words which were common to north country sailors, and have not appeared in other collections. As examples I may mention those of "Rio Grande," "Lowlands," "Blow the man down," "Hilo my Ranzo Way," "Santy Anna," and "Heave away my Johnny." If I have dealt at some length with Miss Smith's book it is not because I wish to disparage a well-intentioned effort, but because I constantly hear *The Music of the Waters* quoted as an authoritative book on sailor shanties; and since the shanties in it were all collected in the district where I spent boyhood and youth, I am familiar with all of them, and can state definitely that they are in no sense authoritative. I should like, however, to pay my tribute of respect to Miss Smith's industry, and to her enterprise in calling attention to tunes that then seemed in a fair way to disappear.

About the same time appeared a collection entitled *Sailor's Songs or Chanties*, in which the music was "composed and arranged on traditional sailor airs" by Dr. Ferris Tozer. These two pieces of information rule the book out of court, since (*a*) a sailor song is not a shanty, and (*b*) to "compose and arrange on traditional airs" is to destroy the traditional form.

Other collections have since appeared, but (for reasons into which I prefer not to enter here) none of them are genuinely authoritative save Capt. W. B. Whall's *Sea*

Songs, Ships, and Shanties. Capt. Whall studied music under Sir John Stainer, consequently we have the necessary combination (which all the other collections lack) of seamanship and musicianship. Since I was until recently a church organist, it may reasonably be asked by what authority I speak concerning shanties, and shanty collecting. I ought, therefore, to explain that my maternal ancestors have followed the sea as far back as the family history can be traced. I have "grown up with" sailor shanties,—sung to me by sailor uncles and grand-uncles since I was a child. I have in later years collected shanties from all manner of sailors, but chiefly from Northumbrian sources. I have collated these later versions with the ones which I learnt at first hand from sailor relatives as a boy. And lastly, I lived for some years in the West Indies,—one of the few remaining spots where the shanty is still alive.

The derivation of the word is unknown. Two have been proposed, but without producing any evidence that could satisfy a philologist. One of them (*un*) *chante* has the disadvantage of suggesting that the word rhymes with "auntie"; and when, in consequence of this derivation, the word is spelt "chanty," the ordinary reader is led to pronounce it "tchahnty" which arouses the irritation and contempt of the sailor, who *always*, *everywhere* makes it alliterate with "shall" and rhyme with "scanty." Its pronunciation is best represented by "Shanty" as in the Oxford Dictionary, which assigns 1869 for its introduction into literature.* There is very little to be said for the derivation from "shanty," a hut, but that from (*un*) *chanté* will not bear serious inspection.

Shanties would appear to have been sung in British ships as early as the fifteenth century. But as Capt. Whall deals with this point in his book nothing further need be said here. The varied character of the sailor's tunes indicates

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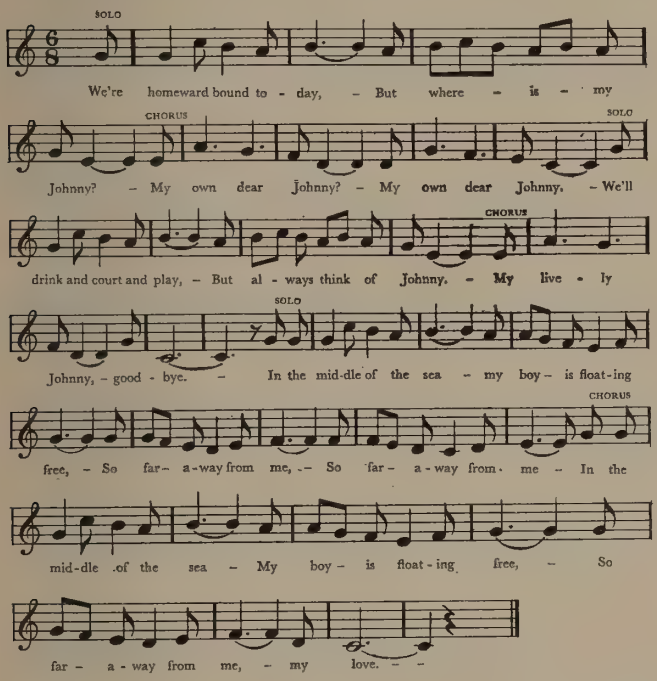
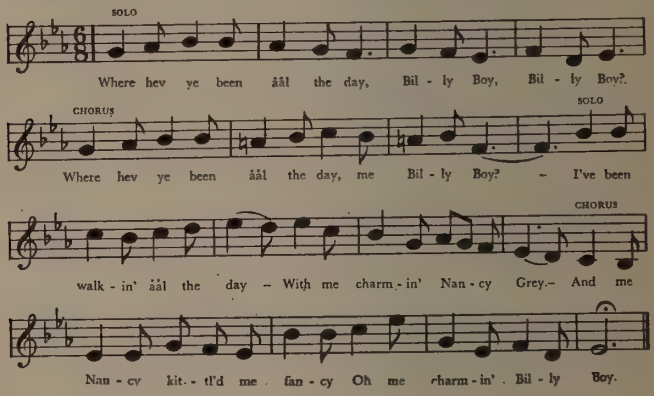
**One of the authorities quoted by the Oxford Dictionary is the James Runciman alluded to above.*

a variety of sources. Mediterranean voyages would account for Italian influence, as, for example, in the following, which has not been printed before. Although sung to me by a Northumbrian sailor, it is redolent of the languor of Venetian lagoons, of moonlight, and swift stealing gondolas, and the tinkling guitar with its unchanging tonic and dominant harmonies:



This is clearly a definite song annexed wholesale, and fitted with English words. Its modern tonality will not attract folk-song collectors, but my sailorman informed me that it was a favourite capstan shanty in his ship.

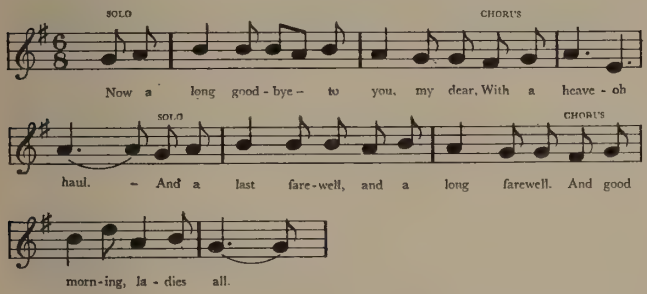
Folk-songs learnt ashore in his native fishing village provided much of the material from which the sailor's shanty was fashioned. Sometimes there would be no adaptation, and the song (especially if it had a double refrain) would be sung complete, as in the following example. It is Northumbrian in origin, and deals with the same topic as "My boy Billy" collected by Dr. Vaughan-Williams. Both words and tune are different from Dr. Vaughan-Williams's, but the idea is the same: "Billy" has been out courting, and undergoes cross-examination concerning the qualifications of his lady-love as housewife. The theme seems common (with varying words and tune) to several English counties.



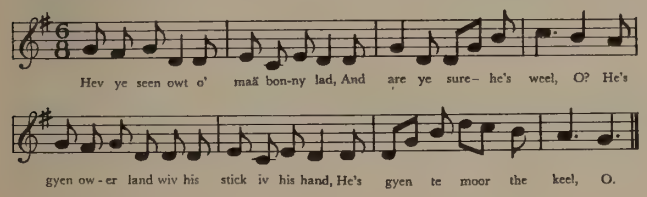
VERSE 2	*Solo*	Is she fit to be yor wife, Billy Boy, Billy Boy?
	Chorus	Is she fit to be yor wife, Me Billy Boy?
	Solo	She's as fit to be me wife As the fork is to the knife,
	Chorus	And me Nancy kittled, etc.

Although I had the following from a Northumbrian sailor I should hesitate to ascribe the tune to a Northumbrian

source without further corroboration. Again the theme—or at least the title—is a familiar one, but I have not come across the tune (or variants of it) in any other part of the country. It was used as a halliard shanty:



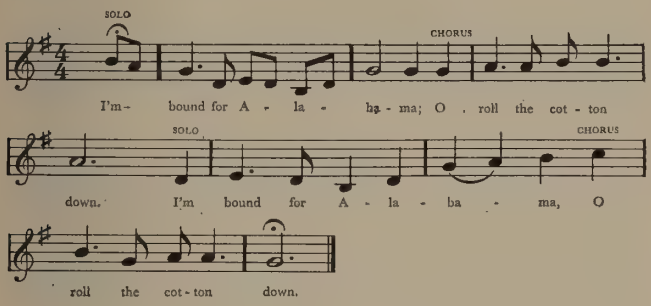
The following beautiful tune I used to hear when a child in the fishing villages of Cresswell and Hauxley. I have the authority of Mr. James Runciman for its being used as a capstan shanty. I cannot remember the words, but Mr. Runciman printed two verses in his book *The Romance of the Coast*. I can now find no one in the district who remembers the song, and my efforts to recapture the words (by enquiries in Newcastle newspapers) have so far proved fruitless. Sir Walter Runciman—who knows practically all the shanties which had a vogue in Blyth ships—tells me that he never heard this particular tune so used. He thinks it must have been "made into a shanty" only aboard the ship in which Mr. James Runciman heard it. I give the chorus, as my memory is not to be trusted for the rest of the words:



In my boyhood the Northumbrian coast was specially rich in folk-songs known to the inhabitants of every fishing village. A considerable proportion of these were bilinear in form, with a lilt or refrain after each line. The presence of this double chorus made such folk-songs specially suitable for shanties. Up to now I do not think it has ever been satisfactorily explained in print why shanties of this type were so strictly localised. The facts would seem to be these. At Blyth and Amble, for example, there was a flourishing Seaman's Union. Its objects were not so pronounced as the Seaman's Union of to-day. It was to some extent a benefit club, and only on matters of grave importance did it approach shipowners in its corporate capacity. The duty on which it most prided itself, and which it carried out with the utmost rigour, was the examination of apprentices when they had completed their indentures. Every apprentice when "out of his time" aspired to a position as Able Seaman either aboard the vessel in which he had served his apprenticeship, or some other ship belonging to the same port. But sailors in those days were very jealous of their prestige and their privileges. In their pride of seamanship they resented the presence of a lubber aboard their ship. Consequently, before they would consent to sail with any time-expired apprentice, the latter was obliged to appear before a small board or committee of sailors of the union, and undergo a very searching examination on all points of practical seamanship. If he passed this severe test he was at liberty to sail in any ship, and was received by any crew as a comrade and an equal. If he failed, he could only ship aboard a vessel as "Half Marrow," receiving only half an ordinary A.B.'s pay. In such contempt was the Half Marrow held, that many ships' crews would not sail with one, and I have even known engagements (contracted during apprenticeship) broken off because a girl's pride would not allow her to marry a sailor whom she regarded as a discredit to his profession. I have also known cases where a Half

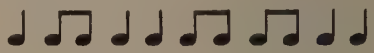
Marrow, scorned by every ship in his native seaport, was obliged to migrate to the Tyne or even to Bristol, in order to obtain employment aboard a type of ship which carried a miscellaneous crew, and where the corporate pride of seamanship was not so pronounced. In those days sailors became so attached to their ship that they were content to spend their whole lives in her, and almost broke their hearts if circumstances obliged them to make a change. It will thus be seen that any local folk-song which obtained a footing aboard the ships of any one port would not be likely, owing to the more or less fixed *personnel* of the crews, to travel farther afield.

Another source of shanties was undoubtedly negroid. The following well-known shanty is a type with which sailors would necessarily become familiar at cotton seaports:



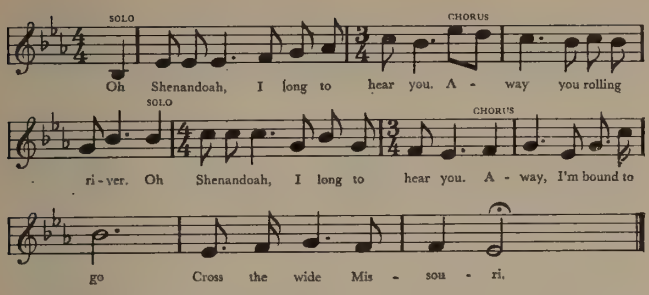
I have seen it stated in the preface to one collection of shanties that those of negro origin are characterised by what we should now call ragtime. This is far from being the case. If there is one thing more than another which distinguishes negro music, it is its direct and insistent rhythm. Everything the negro does is rhythmic. My first experience of this was in the West Indies when two negro carpenters were shingling the roof of my house.

Unlike "Bukkra" operatives they did not work independently, but, although engaged on opposite sides of the roof, drove in the nails tap for tap alternately, to the following rhythmic figure:



This particular rhythm seemed to be the commonest out there, and the most gratifying to their primitive instincts, which were chiefly exercised when the moon was at the full. Parties of negroes would then sit out of doors and beat it through the night without intermission on instruments which for the sake of romance I should like to say were tom-toms. Truth, however, obliges me to state that the maddening reiteration was effected on "Huntley and Palmer" biscuit tins. Ragtime is a product of the stage nigger, not of the real negro. I never found any negro use syncopation. The popular impression that he does so is no doubt due to careless observation of the way in which he beats time to any given tune, viz.: by a tap of the foot followed by a clap of the hands. The foot-tap always comes on the strong beat, and the hand-clap on the weak one. Since the bare foot makes no sound, the casual observer does not notice its action, but he does both see and hear the hand-clap (off the beat) and thinks he is listening to syncopation. A moment's reflection will show that ragtime or any other form of syncopated music is just the thing which could not be used for a shanty where the pull on the rope must necessarily occur on the strong beat of the music.

American influence both as regards music and phraseology is traceable throughout the history of the shanty. One quotation of a beautiful tune—known to every sailor in some version or other—will suffice:



Another source about which there is a certain amount of misapprehension is to be found in popular airs which were annexed in their entirety. "A-roving," "John Brown's Body," and others were used in this way. "Camptown Races" became "The Banks of Sacramento"* and so on. As an old sailor once said to me, "You can make anything into a shanty." Bullen included in his collection the equally well-known "Poor Paddy works on the Railway," and his expressed dislike for it was doubtless due to the commonly accepted opinion that it was not a genuine shanty, but had been imported wholesale from "The Christy Minstrels" who flourished in the 'fifties. But I think it is not sufficiently understood that just as sailors borrowed and adapted tunes from any and every source, so did the Christy Minstrels. Without wishing to be dogmatic, I have the following reason for thinking that "The Christies" annexed "Poor Paddy" from the sailor, and not *vice versa*. Mr. James Runciman (who died in 1891) gave me a shanty which he had learnt from an uncle of his, the melody of which is

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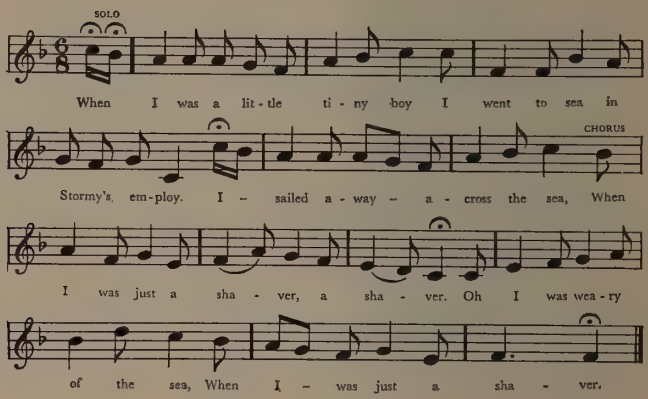
**I notice that Miss Fox-Smith (in "A Book of Shanties") puts forward the suggestion that Stephen Foster may have derived the tune of "Camptown Races" from the sailor, and not* vice versa. *She says: "There seems just a shade of doubt as to which version is the older." On page 24 of her book she gives her reasons.*

nothing more or less than that of "Poor Paddy." I place the two side by side for purposes of comparison:

THE SHAVER



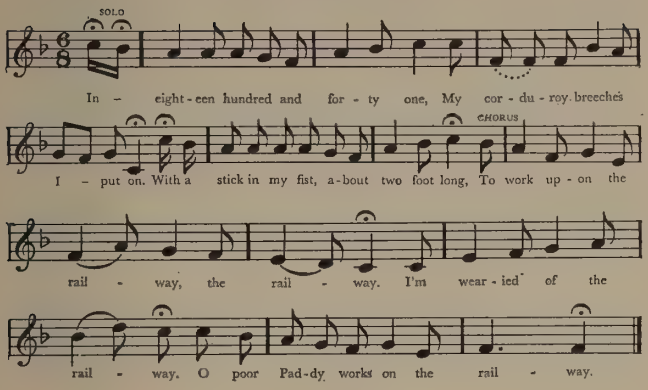
VERSE 2. *Solo*

Oh they whacked me up, and they whacked me down.
The Mate he cracked me on the crown.
They whacked me round, and round, and round.

Chorus

When I was just a Shaver.
It's I was weary, etc.

POOR PADDY

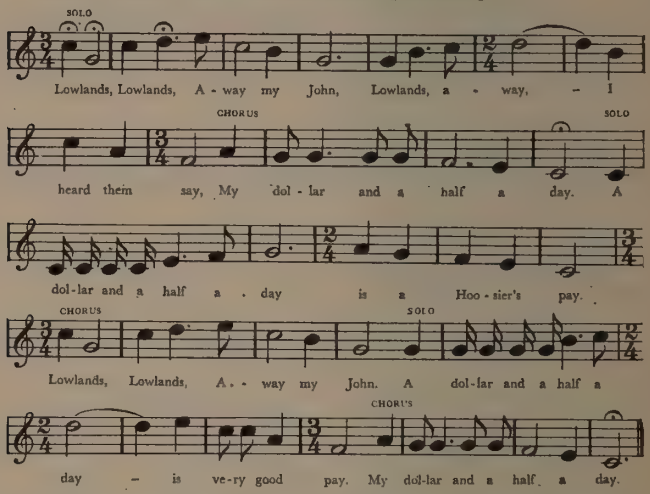


So here at any rate we have an instance of a tune, universally attributed to the Christy Minstrels, but which (whatever its original source) was actually sung at sea before the Christy Minstrels came into existence. (A "Shaver"—by the way—is the north country equivalent of the Cockney term "Little Nipper.")

Shanties may be roughly divided, as regards their use, into two classes (*a*) Hauling shanties and (*b*) Windlass and Capstan. The former class accompanied the setting of the sails, and the latter the weighing of the anchor, or "warping her in" to the wharf, etc. Capstan shanties were also used for pumping ship. The subdivisions of each class are interesting, and the nature of the work involving "walk away," "stamp and go," "sweating her up," "hand over hand" and other types of shanty would make good reading; but a primarily musical dissertation demands economy in nautical details, however fascinating.

Capstan shanties are readily distinguishable by their music. The operation of walking round the capstan (pushing the capstan bars in front of them) was continuous and not intermittent. Both tune and chorus were

as a rule longer than those of the hauling shanty, and there was much greater variety of rhythm. Popular songs—if they had a chorus, or refrain—could be, and were, effectively employed for windlass and capstan work. "Shenandoah" (already quoted) is a good example of the free-rhythm tune, as is also the following haunting melody,—almost impossible of transcription in cold print, so subtly varied and elusive is its phrasing:



An interesting point about this shanty is that—whether by accident or design—it exhibits a rhythmic device commonly practised by medieval composers, known as *proportio sesquialtera*. Expressed in modern notation it would mean the interpolation of bars of $\frac{3}{4}$-time in the course of a composition which was in $\frac{6}{8}$-time. The number of quavers would, of course, be the same in each bar, but the rhythm would be different.

Of the more rhythmic capstan shanties, the following rollicking tune (belonging to the American Clippers) is a fair sample:

SOLO

I nebber see de like since I bin born, When a big buck nig-ger wid de

CHORUS

sea boots on, Says "Johnny come down to Hi - lo. Poor old

man." Oh wake her, oh shake her, Oh wake dat gel wid de

blue dress on, When Johnny comes down to Hi - lo. Poor old man.

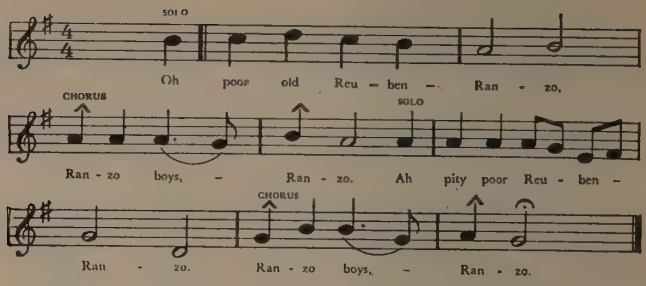
But sentimental tunes had their place at the capstan also:

I thought I heard - the old man say, Good - bye, fare ye well, Good-

bye, fare ye well. I thought I heard - the old - man say, Hoo-

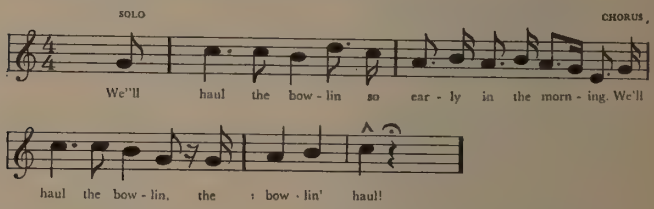
ray my boys we're home - ward bound.

Hauling shanties were usually shorter than capstan ones, and are of two types (*a*) those used for "the long hoist" and (*b*) those required for the "short pull" or "sweating up" (Americans called them the long and the short drag). The former was used when beginning to hoist sails, when the gear would naturally be slack and moderately easy to manipulate. It had two short choruses with a double pull in each. In the following example, the pulls are marked ∧:



It is easy to see how effective a collective pull at each of these points would be, while the short intervals of solo would give time for shifting the hands on the rope and making ready for the next combined effort.

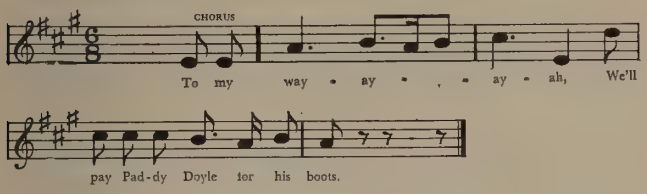
When the sail was fully hoisted and the gear taut, a much stronger pull was necessary in order to make everything fast, so the shanty was then changed for a "sweating up" one, in which there was only one short chorus and one very strong pull:



So much effort was now required on the pull that it was difficult to sing a musical note at that point. The last word was, therefore, usually shouted.

One tune of this type (when a special collective effort was required) was that used to "bunt up" the foresail or mainsail in furling. In this operation the canvas of the sail was folded intensively until it formed a smooth conical bundle. This was called a "bunt," and a strong collective effort was required to get it on to the yard.

Only one short tune was ever used for this bunting operation. It differs from all other shanties in being sung *tutti* throughout:



The same words were sung over and over again, but very occasionally a different text would be substituted. Capt. Whall gives two alternatives which were sometimes used:

"We'll all drink brandy and gin."

and

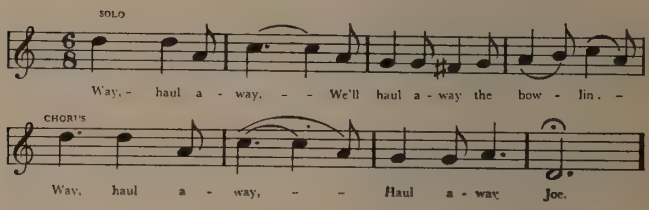
"We'll all shave under the chin."

Mr. Morley Roberts also told me that a variant in his ship was:

"We'll all throw dirt at the cook."

For "pull-and-haul" shanties, the shantyman took up his position near the workers (he did no work himself) and announced the shanty,—sometimes by singing the first line. This established the tune to which they were to supply the chorus. For capstan shanties he usually did the same. He is generally shown in pictures as sitting on the capstan, but so far as I can learn, he more usually took up his position on or against the knightheads. Each shanty had one or two stereotyped verses, after which the shantyman extemporised on any topics he chose. There was no need for any connection or relevancy between one verse and another, nor were rhymes required. The main thing that mattered was that the rhythm should be preserved, and that the words should be such as would keep the workers merry. Great license

was taken in this respect, and the intimacy of the shantyman's topics was such as to make his extemporised verses unprintable. As Capt. Whall says — no seaman in a cargo-carrying ship ever heard a "decent" shanty, and in passenger vessels the shantyman was given the option of "decent words or no shanty." He mentions the notorious "Hog's-eye man" (to which I refer later) as a case in point. It is curious that some of the loveliest melodies were those to which the lewdest kind of words were usually fitted. The following is an instance. Only a few verses are fit for print:



Verse 2. King Louis was the King of France,
Before the Revolution.
Way haul away, etc.

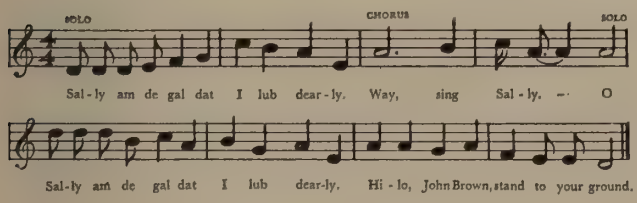
Verse 3. King Louis got his head cut off,
And spoiled his constitution.
Way haul away, etc.

A few shanties had a definite narrative which was adhered to, extemporaneous verses being added only if the regulation ones did not spin out to the end of the job in hand. One of the most popular of these was "Reuben Ranzo" above quoted. It had two usual versions, one with a happy ending (the captain took him into his cabin and "larned him navigation," afterwards marrying him to his daughter) and the other ending with the tragedy of Ranzo being led to the gangway to receive "five-and-furty" lashes for his dirty habits. (In yet another version the indignant crew threw him overboard.)

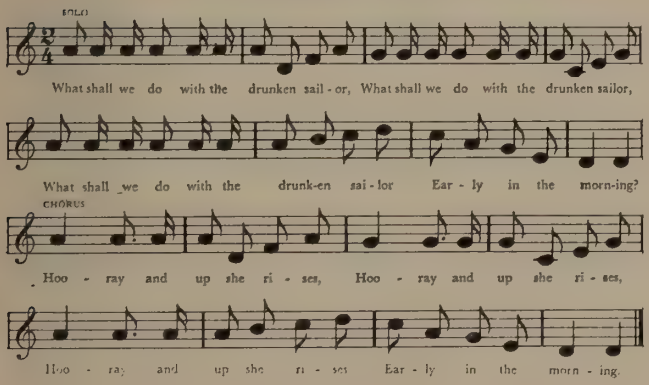
The importance of a shantyman could not be over-estimated. A good shantyman with a pretty wit was worth his weight in gold. He was a privileged person, and was excused all work save light or odd jobs.

Like all traditional tunes, some shanties are in the ancient modes, and others in the modern major and minor keys. It is the habit of the "folksonger" (I am not alluding to our recognised folk-song experts) to find "modes" in every traditional tune. It will suffice, therefore, to say that shanties follow the course of all other traditional music. Many are modern, and easily recognisable as such; others are modal in character, *e.g.*:

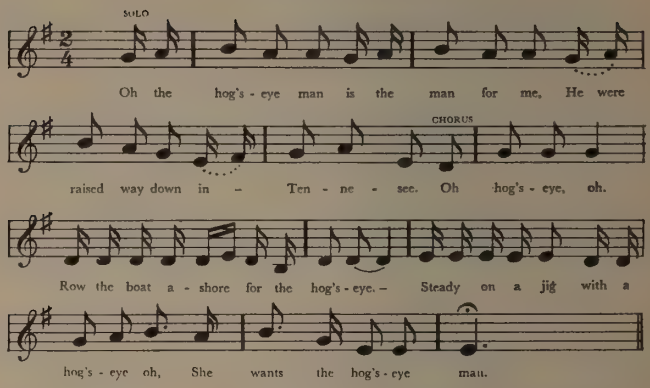
STAND TO YOUR GROUND



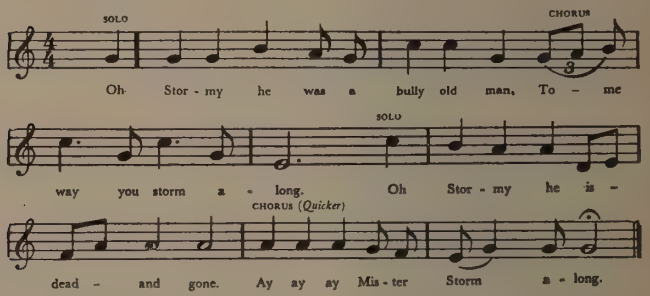
THE DRUNKEN SAILOR



THE HOG'S-EYE MAN

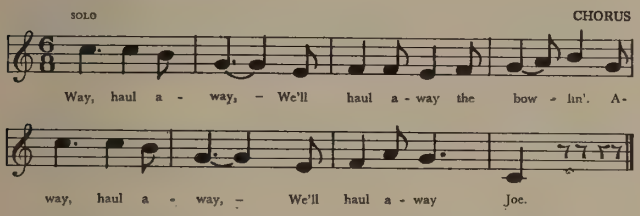


Others fulfil to a certain extent modal conditions, but are nevertheless in keys. Plainsong enthusiasts would no doubt assign the following to the eighth Mode:

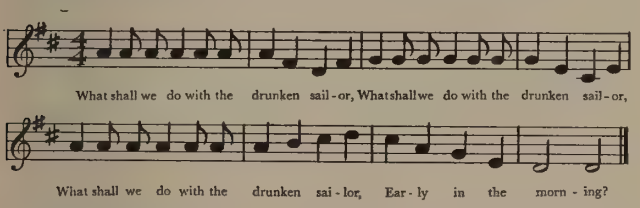


Like many other folk-songs, certain shanties originally no doubt in a mode were, by the insertion of leading notes, converted into the minor key. There was also the tendency on the part of the modern sailor to turn his minor key into a major one. I sometimes find sailors singing in the major, nowadays, tunes which the very

old men of my boyhood used to sing in the minor. A case in point is "Haul away Joe," already quoted. Miss Smith is correct in giving it the minor form which once obtained on the Tyne, and I am inclined to hazard the opinion that that was the original form, and not, as now, the following:



In later times I have also heard *The Drunken Sailor* (a distinctly modal tune) sung in the major as follows:



I have generally found that these perversions of the tunes are due to sailors who took to the sea as young men in the last days of the sailing ship, and consequently did not imbibe to the full the old traditions. With the intolerance of youth they assumed that the modal turn given to a shanty by the older sailor was the mark of ignorance since it did not square with their ideas of a major or minor key. This experience is common to all folk-tune collectors.

Other characteristics, for example:—(*a*) different words to the same melody, (*b*) different melodies to the same or similar words, need not be enlarged upon as they will be self-evident when a definite collection is published.

Of the usual troubles incidental to folk-song collecting it is unnecessary to speak. But the collection of shanties involves difficulties of a special kind. In taking down a folk-song from a rustic, one's chief difficulty is surmounted when one has broken down his shyness and induced him to sing. There is nothing for him to do then but get on with the song. Shanties, however, being labour songs, one is "up against" the strong psychological connection between the song and its manual acts. Two illustrations will explain what I mean.

A friend of mine who lives in Kerry wished a collector to hear some of the traditional keening, and an old woman with the reputation of being the best keener in the district, when brought to the house to sing the funeral chants, made several attempts and then replied in a distressed manner:—"I can't do it; there's no Body." This did not mean that she was unwilling to keen in the absence of a corpse, but that she was unable to do so. Just before giving up in despair my friend was seized with a brain wave, and asked her if it would suffice for him to lie down on the floor and personate the corpse. When he had done this the old woman found herself able to get on with the keening.

An incident related to me quite casually by Sir Walter Runciman throws a similar light on the inseparability of a shanty and its labour. He described how one evening several north country ships happened to be lying in a foreign port. All the officers and crews were ashore leaving only the apprentices aboard, some of whom, as he remarked, were "very keen on shanties," and their suggestion of passing away the time by singing some was received with enthusiasm. The whole party of about thirty apprentices at once collected themselves aboard one vessel, sheeted home the main topsail and commenced to haul it up to the tune of "Boney was a warrior," changing to "Haul the Bowlin'" for "sweating up." In the enthusiasm of their singing and the absence of any officer to call "Vast hauling" they continued operations until they

broke the topsail yard in two, when the sight of the wreckage and the fear of consequences brought the singing to an abrupt conclusion. In my then ignorance, I naturally asked:—"Why couldn't you have sung shanties without hoisting the topsail?" and the reply was: "How could we sing a shanty without having our hands on the rope?" Here we have the whole psychology of the labour song:—the old woman could not keen without the "body," and the young apprentices could not sing shanties apart from the work to which they belonged. The only truly satisfactory results which I ever get nowadays from an old sailor are when he has been stimulated by conversation to become reminiscent, and croons his shanties almost sub-consciously. Whenever I find a sailor willing to declaim shanties in the style of a song I begin to be a little suspicious of his seamanship. In one of the journals of the Folk-Song Society, there is an account of a sailor who formed a little party of seafaring men to give public performances of shanties on the concert platform. No doubt this was an interesting experience for the listeners, but that a self-conscious performance such as this could represent the old shanty-singing I find it difficult to believe. Of course, I have had sailors sing shanties to me in a fine declamatory manner, but I usually found one of three things to be the case:—the man was a "sea lawyer"; or had not done much deep-sea sailing; or his seamanship only dated from the decline of the sailing vessel.

It is doubtless interesting to the folk-songer to see in print shanties taken down from an individual sailor with his individual melodic twirls and twiddles. But since no two sailors ever sing the same shanty quite in the same manner, there must necessarily be some means of getting at the tune, unhampered by these individual idiosyncrasies, which are quite a different thing from what folk-song students recognise as "variants." The power to discriminate can only be acquired by familiarity with the shanty as it was in its palmy days. The collector

who now comes upon the scene at this late time of day must necessarily be at a disadvantage. The ordinary methods which he would apply to a folk-song break down in the case of a labour song. Manual actions were the soul of the shanty; eliminate these and you have only the skeleton of what was once a living thing. It is quite possible, I know, to push this line of argument too far, but everyone who knows anything about seamanship must feel that a shanty nowadays cannot be other than a pale reflection of what it once was.

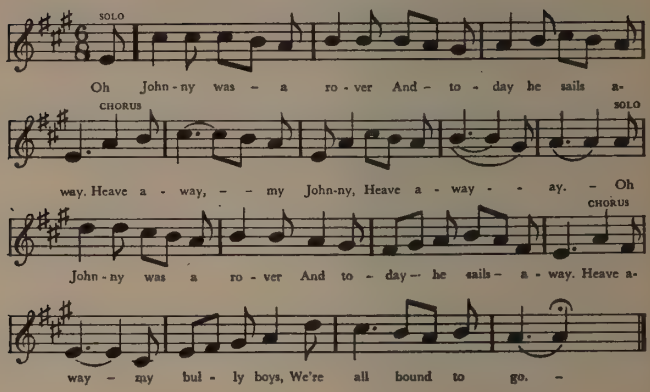
That is why I deprecate the spurious authenticity conferred by print upon isolated versions of shanties sung by individual old men. When the originals are available it seems to me pedantic and academic to put into print the comic mispronunciations of well-known words by old and uneducated seamen.

And this brings me to the last difficulty which confronts the collector with no previous knowledge of shanties. As a mere matter of dates, any sailors now remaining from sailing ship days must necessarily be very old men. I have found that their octogenarian memories are not always to be trusted. On one occasion an old man sang quite glibly a tune which was in reality a *pasticcio* of three separate shanties all known to me. I have seen similar results in print, since the collector arrived too late upon the scene to be able to detect the tricks which an old man's memory played him.

I have already spoken of shanties which were derived from popular songs, also the type which contained a definite narrative. Except where a popular song was adapted, the form was usually rhymed or more often unrhymed couplets. The topics were many and varied but the chief ones were (1) popular heroes such as Napoleon, and "Santy Anna." That the British sailor of the eighteenth century should hate every Frenchman and yet make a hero of Bonaparte is one of the mysteries which has never been explained. Another mystery is the fascination which Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna

(1795-1876) exercised over the sailor. He was one of the many Mexican Presidents and was defeated by the American General Taylor in 1847. That did not prevent the British sailor presenting him in the light of an invariable victor, until he was led out to be shot (he really died a natural death) by persons unknown. (2) The sailor had mythical heroes too; *e.g.* "Ranzo" (already mentioned) and "Stormy" who was the theme of many shanties. No sailor could ever give the least explanation of them, and so they remain the last echoes of long forgotten sages. (3) High sounding, poetic, or mysterious words such as "Lowlands," "Shenandoah," "Rolling River," "Hilo," "Mobile Bay," "Rio Grande" had a great fascination, as their constant recurrence in many shanties shows. (4) The sailor also sang much of famous ships, such as "The Flying Cloud," "The Henry Clay," or "The Victory," and famous lines such as "The Black Ball." Even famous shipowners were celebrated in song, as witness "Mr. John Tapscott," in "We're all bound to go,"—see below. (5) Love affairs (in which Lizer Lee and other damsels constantly figured) were an endless topic. (6) But chiefly did Jack sing of affairs connected with his ship. He never sang of "the rolling main," the "foaming billows," "the storm clouds," etc. These are the stock-in-trade of the landsman; they were too real for the sailor to sing about. He had the instinct of the primitive man which forbids mention of natural forces of evil omen. But intimate or humorous matters such as the failings of his officers, the quality of the food, the rate of pay, or other grievances were treated with vigour and emphasis. Like the Britisher of to-day, he would put up with any hardship so long as he were permitted to grouse about it. The shantyman gave humorous expression to this grousing which deprived it of the element of sulks. Steam let off in this way was a wholesome preventive of mutiny.

WE'RE ALL BOUND TO GO



Verse 2 As I was walking out one day,
Down by the Albert Dock.
Heave away, etc.
I heard an emigrant Irish girl
Conversing with Tapscott.
Heave away, etc.

Verse 3. Good morning, Mr. Tapscott, sir;
"Good morn, my gel," sez he.
Heave away, etc.
It's have you got a Packet Ship
All bound for Amerikee.
Heave away, etc.

The choruses were usually jingles, with no relevance save maintenance of the rhythm.

One feature of the words may be noted. The sailor's instinct for romance was so strong that in his choruses at least (no matter how "hair curling" the solo might be) he always took the crude edge off the concrete and presented it as an abstraction if possible. For example: he knew perfectly well that one meaning of "to blow" was

to knock or kick. He knew that discipline in Yankee packets was maintained by corporeal methods; so much so that the mates (to whom the function of knocking the "packet rats" about was delegated) were termed 1st, 2nd, and 3rd "blowers" or strikers, and in the shanty he sang "Blow the man down." "Knock" or "kick" was too crudely realistic for him. In like manner the humorous title "Hog's-eye" veiled the coarse intimacy of the term which it represented. And that is where—when collecting shanties from the "longshore" mariner of to-day—I find him (if he is uneducated) so tiresome. He not only wants to explain to me as a landsman the exact meaning (which I know already) of terms which the old type of sailor, with his natural delicacy, avoided discussing, but he tries where possible to work them into his shanty,—a thing the sailor of old time never did. So that when one sees in print expressions which sailors did not use, it is presumptive evidence that the collector has been imposed upon by a salt of the "sea lawyer" type.

Perhaps I ought to make this point clearer. Folk-song collecting was once merely an artistic pursuit. Now it has become a flourishing industry of high commercial value. From the commercial point of view it is essential that results should be printed and circulated as widely as possible. Some knowledge of seamanship is an absolute necessity where folk-shanties are concerned. The mere collector nowadays does not possess that knowledge; it is confined to those who have had practical experience of the sea, but who will never print their experiences. The mere collector *must* print his versions. What is unprinted must remain unknown; what is printed is, therefore, accepted as authoritative, however misleading it may be. Many highly educated men, of which Captain Whall is the type, have followed the sea. It is from them that the only really trustworthy information is forthcoming. But so far as I can judge, it is uneducated men who appear to sing to collectors nowadays, and I have seen many a quiet smile on the lips of the educated sailor when he is

confronted with printed versions of the uneducated seaman's performances. For example, one of the best known of all Shanties is "The Hog's-eye man." I have seen this entitled "The Hog-eyed man," and even "The Ox-eyed man." Every old sailor knew the meaning of the term. Whall and Bullen, who were both sailors, use the correct expression, "Hog-eye." The majority of sailors of my acquaintance called it "Hog's-eye." Did decency permit I could show conclusively how Whall and Bullen are right and the mere collector wrong. It must suffice, however, for me to say that the term "Hog's-eye" or "Hog-eye" had nothing whatever to do with the optic of the "Man" who was sung about. I could multiply instances, but this one is typical and must suffice.

We hear a great deal of the coarseness and even lewdness of the shanty, but I could wish a little more stress were laid on the sailor's natural delicacy. Jack was always a gentleman in feeling. Granted his drinking, cursing, and amours; but were not these until Victorian times the hall mark of every gentleman ashore? The Rabelaisian jokes of the shantyman were solos, the sound of which would not travel far beyond the little knot of workers who chuckled over them. The choruses—shouted out by the whole working party—would be heard all over the ship, and even penetrate ashore if she were in port. Hence, in not a single instance do the choruses of any shanty contain a coarse expression.

One final remark about collectors which has an important bearing upon the value of their work. There were two classes of sailing vessels that sailed from English ports,—the coaster or the mere collier that plied between the Tyne or Severn and Boulogne, and the Southspainer, under which term was comprised all deep-sea vessels. On the collier or short voyage vessel the crew was necessarily a small one, and the Shanty was more or less of a makeshift, adapted to the capacity of the limited members of the crew. Purely commercial reasons precluded the engagement of any Shantyman specially

distinguished for his musical attainments. Consequently so far as the Shanty was concerned, "any old thing would do." On the Southspainer, however, things were very different. The Shantyman was usually a person of considerable musical importance, who sang his songs in a more or less finished manner; his melodies were clean, clear-cut things without any of the folk-songer's quavers and wobbles. I heard them in the 'seventies and 'eighties before the sailing-ship had vanished, consequently I speak of the things I know.

MUSIC AS A FACTOR IN EDUCATION

ALTHOUGH music flourishes in many schools, it is as a recreation, or at best "an extra": never as a "school subject." In fact, any proposal to include it in the school curriculum is usually regarded with mild astonishment. That music once flourished at seats of learning, and was on an equal footing with poetry and rhetoric, is an historical fact. How is it that in our schools of to-day it has abdicated the honourable position it once held? In the older universities the Faculty of Music still survives, and at each there still exists a professorial chair. But even here until recent times, music could not be said to have played any part in university life since the sixteenth century. Candidates for musical degrees were not required to reside in a college, or "keep terms," as they would have had to do when reading for a degree in any other faculty. The careless custodianship of musical MSS. in college libraries (priceless ones have completely disappeared) shows the measure of contempt in which music was held at Oxford and Cambridge. The scholarly instinct that would have recoiled in horror from careless handling of a classical or historical MS. was never aroused by almost criminal neglect in the case of a musical one. In other words, music at a seat of learning was considered no occupation for scholars and gentlemen. The place of honour which it held in the medieval university was gone. The pre-Reformation monasteries and collegiate establishments where it once flourished were gone also. Its venue was changed to the theatre and other places of entertainment, and it is small wonder that it came to be eventually regarded as a pleasant recreation but in no case as a serious study.

But if it formed one of the serious studies in the medieval university, that is in itself a recognition of the fact that men did once look upon it as an educational force—as something which did appeal to the intelligence; which

did quicken the intellect; which did have a science of its own, distinct and apart from the mere matter of producing beautiful sounds.

That being so, I do not think it is now so much a question of placing on musicians the onus of proof that music deserves a place in the school curriculum, as of placing on scholars the onus of proof to the contrary. The medieval pedagogues were as truly scholars as their successors to-day. If they recognised music as a necessary part of the scholar's equipment, it seems to need something more than a contemptuous "pooh-pooh" to defend its banishment from seats of learning in later times.

It is true that such music as that of the ball-room, the theatre, the restaurant, and other places of entertainment is foreign to the atmosphere of seats of learning. But the medieval equivalents of such music existed in the old times, and were never considered as a reason for neglect of the art in academic circles. Being an art as well as a science, music is sufficiently many-sided to allow certain offshoots to become popularised into mere recreation—a thing which cannot be said of most other academic subjects. The popular and recreative sides of music existed along with the academic and scientific sides. Each occupied its own recognised and distinctive sphere. There was then less of the modern danger that recreative music should be permeated with pedantry, or the higher branches of the art cheapened by mere sensuous appeal.

It is this confusion of mind which regards music as primarily an appeal to the senses, that is responsible for the feeling of its being too light a subject for serious recognition in seats of learning. That it has an appeal to the senses no one would deny. That appeals to the senses are in many ways a source of danger no one would deny. But I think it will be equally recognised that if there was one thing against which our medieval ancestors sternly set their faces, and were more ready to condemn than we are to-day, it was appeals to the

senses. And yet, in spite of this, they placed the art of music in their seats of learning in a position of equal honour with poetry and the classics. Though the appeal of classical learning to the senses is negligible, that of poetry is considerable. But our ancestors recognised that any such sensuous appeal in poetry was counteracted by its appeal to the intellect as literature. In like manner they recognised that the sensuous appeal of music was more than counterbalanced by its appeal to the intellect as a science, and as an art. Both music and poetry (again I repeat, held by our ancestors as of equal importance with grammar and rhetoric) appeal to the sense of beauty. Beauty, of course, does appeal to the senses, but if it thereby carries an enervating influence, or worse still an anti-moral influence, the blame must be laid not on the art of beauty but on the heart of man. Our senses were given us equally with our intellect. They play a great part in our lives. The exercise of them is a normal part of our lives. It is only when we gratify them unduly or unrestrainedly, or apply them to trivial or ignoble uses that we go astray.

Not to labour this point—I think we may say that our medieval ancestors had a truer and saner idea of the nature and functions of music than we to-day. If they found music to be a necessary part of a student's intellectual life and equipment, I fail to see what argument can reasonably be brought against its necessity to-day.

To come from general principles to their concrete application—we have first to find out how music reached so low an ebb in modern times as to be banished from our educational system. It was not always so in England. Even after the Reformation, the scholarly tradition of music was so strong that Elizabethan musicians continued to produce works such as no succeeding English composers have equalled until the present day. Not only that, but music played (in a very real sense) an integral part in the life of the people. Its position in educational circles is sufficiently shown by the fact that no one was

considered to have received the education of a gentleman who was unable to take up a musical part-book and sing his part in a madrigal *at first sight*. I wonder how many Englishmen to-day (even amongst those who practise music) could perform that feat. Not to be able to perform it in Tudor times was considered as disgraceful as to make a false quantity in Latin.

But it was not only in educational circles that music was cultivated. Peasants sang folk-music as they have never done in modern times. In Wales and Northumberland we know they sang in parts. Town dwellers were remarkably proficient. They sang rounds, catches, and other forms of part-music as easily and naturally as urban youth now sing the latest music-hall song. In every barber's shop there was a lute or cittern for customers to play upon and relieve the tedium of waiting. Shakespeare not only displays a sound knowledge of the technical side of music, but also gives numberless indications of the universal knowledge of the art which prevailed in his time.

What was accomplished in schools and colleges in those days could be accomplished now. It ought to be no more difficult for boys to learn to read music at sight than to learn to read print at sight. It is only that we have lost the tradition. Human nature being what it is, we are too prone to agree with "the Master of Balliol College" that "What I do not know is not knowledge." As a nation we have lost our once universal knowledge of music, so what more natural than that we should hold that knowledge negligible?

The effects of the Reformation, the Civil War, and the Revolution of 1688 on art and letters have become matters of history into which we need not enter now. But apart from them there is a cause for the divorce of music from education in this country which seems to be generally overlooked.

Ever since Charles II brought over continental musicians and discouraged English music, we in this

country have been under the yoke of the foreigner. Handel's vogue in the eighteenth century was the beginning of our subservience to the German. The rise of opera in the same century brought its influx of Italians, and so on until no music of any consequence was produced in this country except by foreigners. The English musician had to pick up the crumbs that fell from the alien's table, and gradually developed into a mere teacher and drudge. His musical attainments were second-rate. He was usually an organist who taught (or professed to teach) all other branches of music indiscriminately—sometimes well, and sometimes badly. He had little to do with the higher walks of music. Like all other "general practitioners" he maintained a general level of mediocrity. Foreigners came over, and departed, with the fortunes they had amassed. Such of them as remained skimmed the cream of musical appointments, and did not always escape the honour of knighthood. But the English musical practitioner remained a being apart, drudging and toiling for a livelihood. Music consequently drifted into the hands of a class divorced from the intellectual life of the nation. In Tudor times, the musician was in the full tide of that intellectual life, and was recognised as the peer of the great ones in literature and art. In Victorian times, when painting and literature flourished exceedingly, the musician who moved in the charmed circle of art and letters was a rare phenomenon. Hence grew up two distinct classes of pedagogy—that confined to school and that practised by the private music teacher. Two species of teaching which had formerly occupied the same ground now belonged to totally different worlds. Thus grew up the legend that music might be all very well as a recreation, but that its inclusion in an educational system was a waste of time and not to be thought of.

In the older public schools the classics were still the basis of study. And when we consider the admirable facilities which these schools offered to studious youth,

who shall say that it was a wrong basis? But when we further consider the lamentable ignorance of the average public-school boy in the very language upon which his years of pupillage have been expended, we may well ask what force there is in the "waste of time" argument when applied to music. The phrase "waste of time" comes with a bad grace from educational institutions which kept boys learning classics during their whole school course, and then turned out only a tiny percentage who had more than a nodding acquaintance with the Humanities.

In the newer educational centres, science (studied in the hard materialistic spirit of the industrial era) held sway to the exclusion of the classics, which were—in their turn—pronounced a "waste of time."

So now, when we are waking up to the conception of education as something more than a mere absorption of facts and dates; when we are beginning to realise that whatever provides a mental stimulus is not out of place in an educational system; when we are beginning to see that a change in the nature of subjects adds to that stimulus by relieving monotony, I hope we shall also begin to realise what an important factor music may once more become in education.

Let us get away at the start from preconceived notions and conventions generally. The very terminology we employ emphasises the false premisses and chaotic principles which hold the field. When we say our boy is "learning music" at school, we only mean that he is having piano lessons, a very different thing, as any long-suffering parent could tell us.

It is not possible, nor desirable, that any attempt should be made in schools to equip a boy musically, as we should equip him classically or mathematically. But it is both possible and desirable that he should be afforded such opportunities of practising music as would (*a*) provide a mental stimulus, and (*b*) give him a good ground-work which would prove of service in after

life, should he wish to pursue the subject further.

First, as regards instrumental music—I think a boy should show distinct musical leanings before he is afflicted with piano lessons. The same applies, though in lesser degree, to the violin. Real proficiency on the violin is less easily acquired than on the piano. An indifferent violin solo is torture, but a number of indifferent string players can produce a good effect, and give listeners pleasure by *concerted* music of an easy character. A school string band (not occupying itself with too difficult music) is more easily formed than is generally supposed, as I have proved from practical experience. Combined effort of this kind partakes of the nature of sport, and I have known boys willing to give up any amount of spare time to band practice who would have wearied to death of solitary (and generally futile) practice on the piano.

But, to my mind, more important than the learning of "an instrument" is the exercise of the oldest musical instrument in the world—the human voice. Not only is it a healthy physical exercise, but it quickens the pulse, induces mental alertness, and incidentally brings the young mind in contact with things of real beauty as distinct from mere utility. The low standard of musical taste which prevailed in the last century rendered the full exercise of this practice somewhat difficult. The music available for use in schools was of a poor type. Now, however, there is ample supply of all types and all degrees of difficulty, suited for class-singing. Not that I think it necessary always to sing in parts. Our British folk-songs have now been rescued from oblivion, and nothing better could be given to a class to sing. Daily class-singing need not occupy much time—ten minutes would be an agreeable break between other lessons. Ten or fifteen minutes is not much in itself, but ten or fifteen minutes per day is a great deal, and a class could acquire a large repertoire and much musical knowledge from such a routine.

But most of all do I advocate short talks on music. The field offered is practically unlimited—history, biography, critical analysis, form, being only a few of the headings which I have found most attractive to the average boy if *attractively* presented in the form of "musical appreciation." A gramophone is almost indispensable. I know one of our schools where the boys have a good all-round knowledge of musical history, plus a healthy standard of criticism, derived entirely from the gramophone, and their own concerted efforts.

The further we get away from the inept teaching methods which made piano lessons mere drudgery, and the more we try to interest the average boy in the relation of music to life and letters, the sooner we shall realise all we have missed by the exclusion of that subject from school. I have invariably found that the average boy who has no intention of learning to play an instrument can take as genuine an interest in music as anyone else, and the amount of critical observation he shows is really remarkable.

I purposely avoid any discussion of how these suggestions are to be carried into effect. I also omit reference to details such as choir practices; the choice of music; hymn singing in chapel, etc. These can be more fruitfully treated elsewhere. All I set out to do in this instance is to plead that there is nothing inherent in music which renders it an unworthy intellectual pursuit in schools; to show that it was once cultivated with high success in the schools of our country; that it did not then interfere with other branches of education; and that what was once possible is yet more possible now. Lastly, that I have never failed to find that it brightened dull boys and rendered them more alert at other tasks, and that boys who show real aptitude for music are usually equally alert in every other respect. The popular fallacy that a musical boy is a dreamy boy is refuted by everyone who has had anything to do with musical instruction.

SAMUEL SEBASTIAN WESLEY
(1810–1876)

HOW quickly our musical world has changed since the war!

In the pre-war generation the organ world ruled British music; the path to musical eminence lay through the organ loft; nearly every British musician of any consequence (like Sullivan or Stanford) began his career as an organist. A cathedral appointment was the recognised goal of every good musician's ambition. The organ loft standards of taste; the organ loft assessment of composers; the organ loft's valuation of musical reputations; all were unquestioned by a docile general public. So it is no wonder that when the organ world assessed Wesley as a "great" man he was unhesitatingly accepted as such by the world outside.

But nowadays—when the domination of the organ loft has come to an end, when the average citizen is profoundly indifferent to what is going on in the organ world, when the overwhelming majority of the British nation neither knows nor cares what happens "in quires and places where they sing"—it is not surprising that on the fiftieth anniversary of Wesley's death (April 19th, 1926) it needed "Wesley celebrations" in churches all over the country to remind the average citizen that such a person had ever existed, and to set a new generation of music students (untouched by organ loft traditions) enquiring "who is S. S. Wesley?"

Organists themselves are mainly responsible for this ironic suitation. Since Wesley's death they have been unable to speak of his music except in superlatives. The Britisher dislikes superlatives. Consequently there grew up a generation of young musicians who (antagonised by the superlatives) declined to make the acquaintance of Wesley's music with the result that, outside the (continually narrowing) circle of the organ loft, the young

musician of today knows nothing about either Wesley or his music.

This is to be regretted, for—after all—"Samuel Sebastian" was by no means an undistinguished member of the distinguished Wesley family. He inherited much of their genius together with a share of that eccentricity with which genius is usually allied.

The facts of his life are few and simple but they serve to explain a character which has been too readily accepted as complex.

A grandson of Charles Wesley the poet, and therefore a grandnephew of the founder of Methodism, Samuel Sebastian was the eldest of three children which his father—"Old Sam" Wesley (that erratic genius and Bach enthusiast)—had by Sarah Sutor, and was born in London in August 1810. At nine years of age we find him one of the Children of the Chapel Royal, singing so charmingly before George IV, that "The First Gentleman in Europe" presented the child with a gold watch. At sixteen he was organist at St. James's, Hampstead, and three years later he exchanged these duties for similar ones at St. Giles's, Camberwell. Later in the same year he was appointed to St. John's, Waterloo Road, and held the two appointments together, though how he performed their duties history does not say. To these two posts he added yet another in the following year, Hampton Parish Church.

Fashionable as pluralism was amongst the clergy, it was not countenanced in connexion with organists, so in consequence of clerical protests he resigned the St. John's appointment, but retained the other two by the convenient device of placing his complacent parent as permanent deputy at Hampton. This arrangement presumably furnished him with a *pied à terre* for those fishing expeditions which were a passion with him through life.

Two years later he succeeded Clarke-Whitfield as organist of Hereford Cathedral, commencing his duties with the opening of a new organ (November 6, 1830). The "Dictionary of National Biography" brings theories

to support the presumption that on this occasion *The Wilderness* received its first public performance.

The history of this—his best known—anthem is amusing. In December of the same year he submitted it for the Gresham Prize, then given annually by "Miss Hackett the Choirboys' Friend." Nowadays nobody knows that dear old lady even by name, but the musical journals of a generation ago teemed with references to her; she was then an historic—one might almost say legendary—figure. So "large" did she "loom" (as every good stylist would say) in organ circles, that her "life and works" (another use-hallowed expression) seemed to contribute the one and only piece of musical history which mid-Victorian organists showed signs of having assimilated.

Wesley's *Wilderness* caused mirth to the wise men who sat in judgment upon it. One of their descendants, it is said, keeps as a cherished family heirloom a sketch which his scandalised ancestor drew on a blotting-pad during the adjudication. The sketch represents a perspiring choirboy trying to open his mouth wide enough to negotiate the top A in the final quartet. R. J. S. Stevens (the glee writer) thus justified the verdict of himself and his fellow adjudicators: "A clever thing, but not Cathedral music." Even so did the "safe" musicians of the 'seventies shake their grave heads over "Stanford in B flat."

But there is no need to share the indignation of more recent musical journalism over Wesley's treatment in the Gresham affair. He was judged by the musical mandarins of his day; his music was more original than was proper or seemly; the mandarins (true to type) only did what they have always done, and could be relied upon to do today in similar circumstances. Wesley was duly "turned down" with the inevitable results. *The Wilderness* is now familiar to the whole English-speaking world; Wesley's successful rival is forgotten and so are the mandarins who awarded him the prize. Middle-aged musicians will remember an unconsciously humoursome journal (efflorescent in the 'nineties) which kept two special bees in

its bonnet; one was the Gresham business (judging from the frequency with which it boiled over on the subject) and the other was the man Wagner.

As late as the beginning of this century it consistently strafed Wagner as an impudent revolutionary and a charlatan who would never have been tolerated in the company of such solid musicians as Sir John Goss, Sir Henry Bishop, Sir Frederick Ouseley, Sir George Alexander Macfarren, Sir George Smart, Sir Jules Benedict, Sir Michael Costa (Sir Joseph Barnby was suspect, for he actually had the audacity to conduct the first London performance of *Parsifal*), or Doctor Zachariah Buck "of Norwich." Simultaneously there used to appear periodical expressions of contempt for the obliquity of the Gresham judges who strafed Wesley for the very same reason—that he had broken with established tradition. Ah well! peace be to all their ashes. Wagner is still with us; Wesley is not a penny the worse; and so the world wags.

Wesley's revenge on his judges came twenty years later, when *The Wilderness* was given under his conductorship at the Birmingham Festival with orchestral accompaniment.

In 1835 he married the Dean of Hereford's sister (who bore him four sons and one daughter) and removed to Exeter where he remained for seven years as Cathedral organist. During this period he took (by accumulation) the degrees of Bachelor and Doctor of Music, his expressed object being to qualify for a University professorship. We know that he applied for vacant Chairs of Music at Edinburgh in 1841 and again in 1844, as well as at Oxford in 1848. He was not appointed to either post, but there still seems some doubt as to whether he was passed over or merely withdrew his candidature.

Dean Hook invited him to Leeds Parish Church in 1844, and he remained there till appointed organist of Winchester Cathedral in 1849. To the Leeds period belongs his "Service in E," of which more anon.

He became professor of the organ at the R.A.M. in 1850, and in 1865, when the Dean and Chapter of Gloucester consulted him about the appointment of a new organist, he offered himself for the post, not very surprising after his sixteen years of struggle with anti-musical "authorities" at Winchester Cathedral.

The remainder of his life was spent at Gloucester. He conducted the "Three Choirs' Festival" there in 1865-68-74. From the Gladstone government in 1873 his services to music were recognised by a civil list pension of £100 per annum. To the credit of subsequent governments, they continued this pension to his widow until her death in 1888.

Wesley played his last cathedral service on Christmas Day, 1875. He lingered on until the April of the following year when he died peacefully, and was buried, according to his own request, in the old cemetery at Exeter beside his only daughter who predeceased him.

With these bare chronological facts and Wesley's published compositions before us, it is not difficult to assess the value of his work or to place him in his true perspective.

If the task has hitherto seemed difficult it is merely because he was a church organist whose activities did not extend much beyond ecclesiastical circles, and in consequence had little bearing on the wider realm of music outside. Add to this the fact that no sooner does the inquiring musical critic enter the realm of ecclesiastical music than he finds himself "up against" estimates of values and standards of criticism which do not obtain in "the world of music," as we understand the term.

In the ecclesiastical realm (which includes, of course, "the organ world") he will find in operation a "general consensus of opinion" which "places" each church composer in his appointed niche. He will find no one bold enough to question this "general consensus of opinion." He will find that the issue in any given case is usually determined by considerations other than musical. If any

ordinary musician doubts this, let him say to any true-to-type organist of his acquaintance that Doctor Maurice Greene's anthems are Handel-and-water; that Boyce's "O where shall wisdom be found?" is not a masterpiece; that Purcell's anthems are deliciously secular; that "I beheld and lo" is not Dr. Blow's high-water mark; that Walmisley wrote better things than "Walmisley in D minor"; that one service by John Ireland is worth six by Henry Smart; that "Parry in D" is not the last word in music—and note the result. If he does not come out from the presence of that organist even as a worm that is crushed his experience will have been unique.

From such strange standards of criticism, so inexplicable to the ordinary musician, Wesley has suffered more than is right or just. Ignored by clerical employers during life, he has (since his death) been the subject of so much exaggerated adulation that the plain musician may be pardoned if he has set him down as negligible without troubling to enquire further about him or his music.

* * *

There is no doubt that in one respect Wesley stood supreme; as an organist it seems indisputable that he challenged comparison with any of his continental contemporaries. From his father he inherited his devotion to Bach at a time when that composer was practically unknown in England. Yet even here his erratic temperament peeps out. He was a great executant, and yet his own contributions to organ literature (save perhaps in his Prelude and Fugue in C sharp minor) are negligible; he was more "modernist" than his contemporaries, and yet he put up a lifelong fight against equal temperament on the keyboard and the extension of the pedal-board below G.

His songs are favourably spoken of, but as I have never seen any of them I am not qualified to express an opinion.

When hymnology was at a low ebb he published his collection known as "The European Psalmist." All one can say, at this time of day, is that the tunes were vocal

in character, and if they did not exhibit any great harmonic virility they were always tasteful and in striking contrast with the aridity of other contemporary work.

One doubts if he himself would care to be remembered by his rare excursions into the realm of chamber music, and for the orchestra he never displayed any flair. It is by his church compositions that he would have elected to stand or fall.

Any assessment of these must clearly distinguish between the standards of the organ loft and the ordinary canons of musical criticism.

If Wesley is to be brought under the latter it is only possible to say that we are bound to place him amongst the Kapellmeister class where even he would not be supreme. But in the more parochial British organ world he must always remain an outstanding figure.

When one considers the arid list of "Services" ("Jackson in F" was then in full bloom) which were the daily bread of the cathedral organist of Wesley's time, his Service in E comes with grateful freshness. But even there he cannot entirely shake off the tradition of the eight-bar phrase with its tiresome full close. Still we have some beautiful flashes, such as "For he that is mighty" in the "Magnificat," and that little passage in the "Gloria" which is almost note for note with a motet of the Spaniard Duron (though it is improbable that Wesley had ever seen it, as there was not in his day a single copy of *Lyra Sacro Hispania* in England). The Te Deum is suave and uneventful, but the lay-out of the Nicene Creed is dignified and the part-writing flowing, save in the section "And I believe in the Holy Ghost. . . . remission of sins," where invention seems to have failed him and he frankly throws up the sponge. His other two services are trifles which need no discussion. It is to his anthems that we must turn for the true Wesley.

Putting oneself in the position of the intelligent musical foreigner, unhampered by English organ-loft traditions, the first thing that strikes one is their scrappiness. One

short movement succeeds another, but any connecting thread which would bind them into a big design is difficult to find. "Ascribe unto the Lord" is generally accepted as his most characteristic "big anthem," but what do we find?—a very ordinary opening of fifteen bars for alto, tenor, and bass in unison, then six bars of chorus, "Let the whole earth stand in awe of him," the last half of which is practically identical with a passage in another and better anthem ("Thou wilt keep him"). Then twelve more bars of recitative, and a repetition (in another key) of "Let the whole earth." This six-bar chorus is very beautiful and expresses the words well, but no development follows and we are immediately launched into a "Verse" for two trebles and two altos, in triple time, of no particular distinction, and "pretty-pretty" in character. It spins out to five pages*; on the third there is a flow of rather pleasing contrapuntal writing but it quickly evaporates without development. Then comes a chorus—"As for the gods of the heathen"—where the fugal opening (on quite a distinguished subject) gives promise of big things, but after one entry of the subject in each part (followed by a page of good contrapuntal writing) the movement meanders in a formless way to a conventional conclusion. Then come two pages in which the voices answer each other in *quasi recit.*, followed by another "Verse" quite commonplace in character. Another page of full chords (chorale fashion) is followed by the final chorus where the basses open with a fine fugue subject; this is answered by the trebles at the octave (with the queer device of a few stray alto minims and semibreves thrown in to keep it company) but no fugue follows. The subject reappears in the bass three pages later, but no development ensues, and the chorus winds its way along to no goal in particular though the part-writing is well-turned and effective.

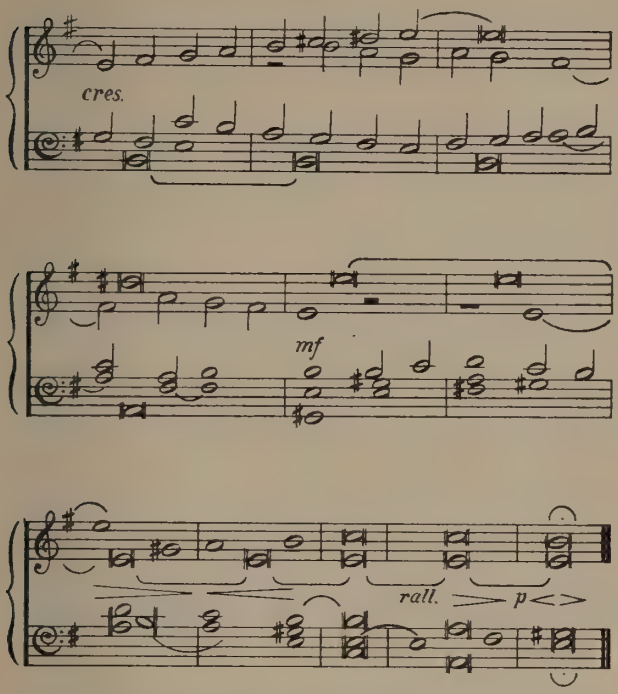
**In this analysis, I have adhered to the pagination of Novello's* octavo *edition.*

I have referred to this work at length, as it is typical of his "big anthems"—plenty of promise but little fulfilment. He gives every indication of being able to write a good fugue but he never writes one. He did not paint on a big canvas. His big works suggest a number of little works pieced together. His "big anthems" are merely lengthy anthems, which is another pair of shoes altogether. Flashes of real beauty appear frequently, only to disappear quickly. He seems to have lacked the concentration which goes to the building up of big work. To call his "big" anthems "great" is to confuse the habit of industry with the gift of concentration.

In his shorter works he shows to better advantage. Opinions will always be divided about his longer anthems—divided, that is, between those who think them lacking in form and continuity, and those who hold every note Wesley wrote as sacrosanct.

But the sternest critic will find it difficult to withhold his tribute of respect to the shorter anthems, which show deep devotional feeling and exhibit part-writing of a high order. Primarily a writer for voices and organ, we must judge him on that ground, and not criticise him for lacking qualities to which he did not aspire.

An interesting example of this particular style is, "Cast me not away," which is conceived in a spirit of real devotion. Up to the last two pages it is not strikingly original, but at the words "that the bones which Thou hast broken may rejoice," Wesley breaks into a piece of dignified and expansive part-writing for six voices to which any composer of the period might have been glad to put his name. The organ part here gives a fair idea of its broad sweep.



"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace" is to my mind Wesley's high-water mark. It is a coherent whole, and not (like too much of his other work) a collection of scraps. It maintains a definite atmosphere throughout. The part-writing has real beauty, and the restraint of the whole thing (charged as it is with deep feeling) just stops short of genius. This is how it concludes, so far as the organ part can show it:

Thou wilt keep - him in per - fect -

Ch. or Sw.

senza Ped.

peace, whose mind is stay - ed on Thee, on

Thee, is stay - ed on Thee.

Ch. or Sw. *p* *e sostenuto* - - *ritard.*

Ped. 16 feet

In spite of the way that "competent critics" have dismissed "God be merciful," I feel no shame in confessing a sneaking fondness for it. Possibly I am haunted by a far-off memory of it that sends the critical faculty to sleep:—King's College Chapel on a winter's afternoon, with all the glamour of a medieval setting in that dim nave; a gleam of white-robed choristers silhouetted against the shadows that the twinkling candle-light

throws across mullioned window and carven stall; Dr. Mann at the organ that adds a mellow colouring to the passionless purity of the voices; the bass solo acquiring an almost mystical distinction as John Carrington lifts his glorious voice.

It was at moments like these that one somehow felt Wesley's music to be supremely adapted to its setting; it is by such moments as these that one would wish to remember him. Considerations of technical form and design assume rather paltry proportions beside the aesthetic appeal which the music carries under such conditions. It is at such times that one begins to wonder whether one's critical faculty is at fault; whether one has not missed some bigger conception behind the music which looks so formless and scrappy on paper; whether one has not expected too much of a composer who, after all, did stand head and shoulders above his contemporaries of the English organ loft.

No one with Wesley's devotion to Bach could have had other than lofty ideals. However limited the scope of his music, it is at least the outward and visible sign of a cultured mind and a gracious personality.

We do right to hold in reverence the memory of a noble and picturesque figure.

EARLY BELGIAN COMPOSERS

The general public is quite content to treat things outside its range as negligible quantities: and even moderns, who can wax eloquent on questions of contemporary music, take but a languid interest in the initiatives. . . . This is an unfortunate blunder. We can interest ourselves in the masterpieces of the Middle Ages, in the combined achievements of architects, sculptors, and stained-glass workers, to whose efforts we owe our Gothic cathedrals, in romance of chivalry and adventure, in fables and chronicles, in the venerable landmarks of our national literature—but not in the musical compositions of the same period. The social history of the past can excite the modern historian no less, if not more, than the political: we can enjoy reconstructing the intimate life of the thirteenth century by delving into contemporary texts: we find a picturesque attraction in their intrusions into the family life of Seigneur *and* Bourgeois, *in living their daily lives and sharing their amusements. . . . Moreover, these researches appeal to the most obstinate imagination. The history of that music becomes also the history of that life.* (PIERRE AUBRY, "Trouvères et Troubadours," translated by CLAUDE AVELING. G. Schirmer and Co.)

This quotation might fitly be framed and hung on the walls of academies and colleges of music where our musical ancestors are patronised by an occasional allusion to their existence; where their names are chiefly known through having a date attached to them to be memorised for examination purposes; where their works (if referred to at all) are dismissed as crude or childish; but where the actual music they wrote is as utterly an unknown quantity as Aztec metaphysics.

The general interest taken since the war in things Belgian naturally extends to its music. We know the Belgium of Grétry, of César Franck, of Vieuxtemps and Ysaye, and we are rapidly learning all we can about more modern representatives of her musical art. But what do we know of the Belgium of Dufay, of Ockenheim, of

Josquin, of Clemens non Papa, of de Waert, of Willaert, of Di Lasso, to say nothing of Acourt, Binchois, Franchois, the two Lantins, Loqueville, de Sarto, Brasart, Fontaine, Grenon, Malbecque, Arcadelt, de Kerle, Waelrent, de Monte—all men of renown in their day? "The most obstinate imagination" of the veriest Cook's tourist cannot fail to be stimulated by the wealth of medieval beauty dominating every corner of Belgian territory,—painting, stained-glass, sculpture, architecture, —all is an open book to him because he has eyes and cannot fail but see. But the music which grew up contemporaneously with these art treasures he so admires—where can it be found? Was it the negligible quantity that the writers of musical textbooks would have us believe? Was it (as they imply) the crude, painful gestation of an art that was not to attain maturity until it blazed forth in the full glory of the "Elijah?" Or did we have to wait for Schumann and Brahms? (We must not whisper Bartók or Stravinski for they are not yet received in polite musical circles.) Confound the textbooks! Art is one and indivisible—the present linked to the past with unbreakable bonds. The master-mind *is* the master-mind, no matter how remote his date. Dufay, Josquin, di Lasso, were acknowledged as equals by the men who painted immortal pictures, who raised immortal architecture, who chanted immortal poems. Their idiom was not our idiom, any more than the idiom of Memling is that of Whistler. But they were great. Their music did have a definite aesthetic appeal in an age more devoted to art than our own. Let us then see what manner of men they were.

The Belgium of today includes two distinct races: the Flemings (who slightly preponderate) and the Walloons. The former are Teutons, speaking a species of Dutch, and the latter Celts, speaking a Romance dialect akin to the ancient northern French. The two races are as sharply contrasted as English and Welsh. The fair, phlegmatic and reflective Fleming has always been

distinguished in painting, as has the dark, mercurial and active Walloon in music. Van Eyck, Memling, Rubens and Van Dyck were Flemings. Dufay, Josquin and di Lasso (the greatest names in Belgian music) were Walloons.

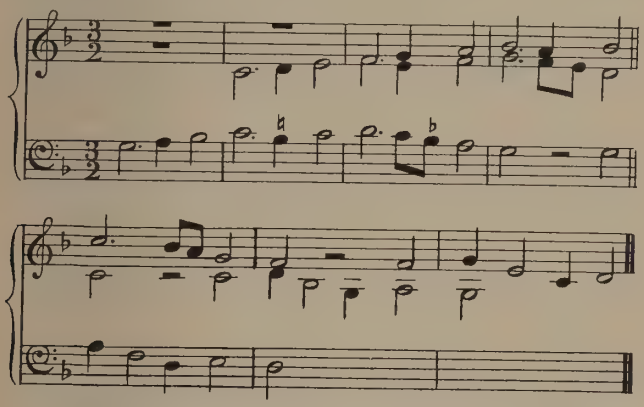
Anything like an exhaustive treatment of early Belgian music is impossible here. But the consideration of a few outstanding personalities is desirable.

The supremacy of English music (in the person of John Dunstable) in the early half of the fifteenth century is now not disputed. Composers were still chained to the Plainsong as *canto fermo*, but Dunstable brought to the task greater coherency and constructive design. How greatly he influenced the rising Belgian school is seen from a poem by Martin le Franc composed between 1436 and 1444 (quoted by Wooldridge, p. 143, vol. II, "Oxford History of Music"), in which the superiority of Dufay and his contemporaries over their immediate predecessors is said to arise from their adoption of English methods. The great Belgian school may thus be said to have its source in England. But while Dunstable's countrymen were for a long period content with a mechanical imitation of their master's work, the Belgians expanded the methods of Dunstable and developed them. It was not until just before the death of Josquin—that is, shortly after the accession of Henry VIII—that Belgian music came over the seas to England and influenced our composers, just as our music had influenced theirs in Dunstable's time.

We may indeed note two points in which the Flemish composers of their period surpassed their English contemporaries. "The practice of writing on a Plainsong *canto fermo* was falling into disuse; and with this support withdrawn, it became a problem how to give strength and coherence to a composition. England had no ready answer: the Fleming met the difficulty first by a skilful use of canonic imitation, and secondly by developing, though as yet in a primitive and immature fashion, the

sense of harmonic structure. It is impossible to over-rate the importance of these discoveries. The former was the means of knitting together a polyphonic texture which was in danger of becoming unravelled. The latter led directly to that use of harmonic colour from which music derives so much of its emotional appeal, and thereby of its poetic significance."* If Belgium may be said to have repaid—in her post-Josquin music—her debt to England, we may as truly be said to have repaid our debt to Belgium in the rejuvenated English school of Taverner, Shepherd, Tye, Whyte, Tallis and Byrd.

That canonic imitation was, however, not unpractised before Josquin may be seen in a very free and flexible three-part "fuga" of Ockenheim, of which I only quote the first two melodic phrases:



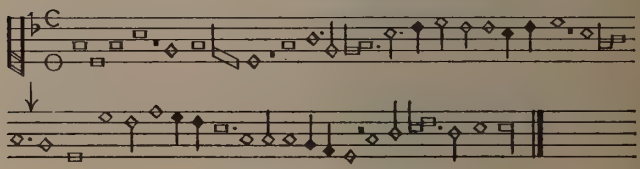
And here, before proceeding to more detailed criticism, it may interest the general reader to give some idea of the appearance of this fifteenth-century music and of the methods of translating it into modern notation. Such a

From a speech by Sir Henry Hadow at the International Historical Congress held in London, 1913.

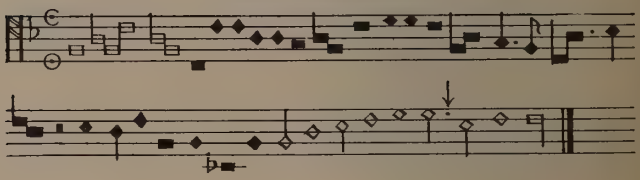
thing as a "score" was unknown. Each vocal part was written or printed separately. There were no bar lines, so there could have been no "conducting" by the choir-master in the sense in which we understand the term. The *Tactus*, or Measure, was the only approach to our idea of a bar. It was the unit of measurement, and was usually a breve. In a composition where all breves were of equal length, the conducting of the music by a tap of the hand (or a blow with a roll of music-paper—a custom that obtains in the Sistine Choir to this day) presented no difficulty. But seeing that the breve in one vocal part sometimes equalled three semibreves, and in another vocal part (in the same composition) equalled only *two*, it is difficult to conjecture how the performance was directed, except on the assumption that each singer beat his own time. The musical examples which follow will make this point clear. They are selected not for any artistic merit, but to show the complexities of the notation, the remarkable skill shown by composers, and the high proficiency demanded of singers in those days.

I give firstly the vocal parts of an extract from Ockenheim's *Missa Prolationum* and later the same vocal parts reduced to score in modern notation.

ALTUS *ex* DISCANTU *in unisono*



BASSUS *ex* TENORE *in unisono*



You will notice that only one line of music is given for both Alto and Soprano (*Discantus*). Both sing the same notes, but in different times, indicated by the *two time-signatures on the one line*. The Tenor and Bass parts are similarly treated.

The Soprano time-signature (a semicircle) indicates "Imperfect time with the Lesser Prolation"—*i.e.* a Breve=two Semibreves, and a Semibreve=two Minims (exactly as at the present day).

The Alto time-signature(a full circle) indicates "Perfect Time with the Lesser Prolation"—*i.e.* a Breve=*three* Semibreves, and a Semibreve=two Minims.

The Tenor time-signature (a semicircle enclosing a dot) indicates "Imperfect Time with the Greater Prolation" —*i.e.* a Breve=two Semibreves, and a Semibreve=*three* Minims.

The Bass time-signature (a full circle enclosing a dot) indicates "Perfect Time with the Greater Prolation"—*i.e.* a Breve=*three* Semibreves, and a Semibreve=*three* Minims.

Turning to the notation, the notes used are:

The *Longa*, or Long .. .. ..

The *Brevis*, or Breve .. .. ..

The *Semibrevis*, or Semibreve .. ..

The *Minima*, or Minim .. .. ..

The *Semiminima*, or *Fusa*—*i.e.* Crotchet

The *Chroma*, or Quaver .. ..

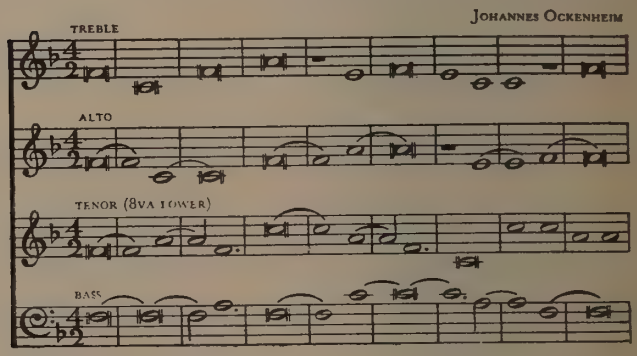
The Semibreve and Minim rests hung from, or rested on, the line just as they do now, but you will notice they are vertical instead of horizontal.

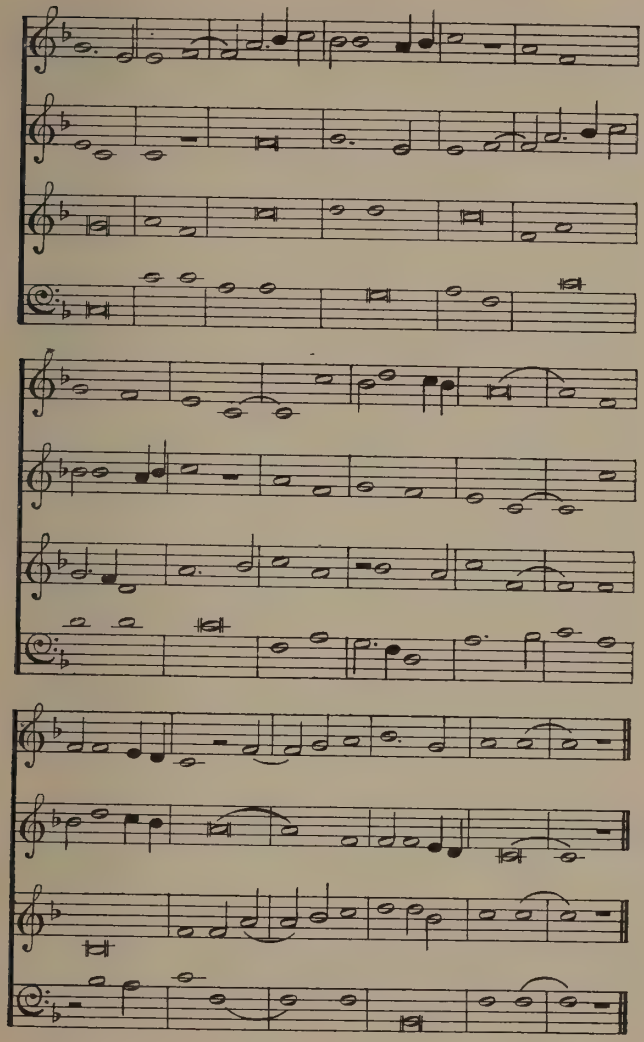
You will also notice such figures as:

These are *Ligatures*, or groups of notes bound together (*ligatus*). The rules for determining the values of the respective notes are too lengthy to quote here. But some idea may be gathered from a comparison of the score and parts in the present example.

Note also the black Breves and Semibreves. This indicates *Hemiolia*, or (in Latin) *Proportio Sesquialtera*. Stripped of technicalities it means that in triple time these black notes lost one-third of their value. Note also the dots which I have indicated by arrow-heads. They are not (as in modern music) signs that the note preceding them becomes half as long again. They are "Points of Perfection." In other words, they signify the completion of a triple measure. If they were absent, the note which in this instance follows them would be *doubled* in length (again it is unnecessary to quote the bewildering rule enforcing this). The Sopranos (singing in duple time) would disregard their dot, but to the Altos the dot would mean *no* doubling of the semibreve which followed, as would otherwise have been the case. The same rules would apply to the "Point of Perfection" in Tenor and Bass parts.

I now give (in modern score) the solution of the extract.



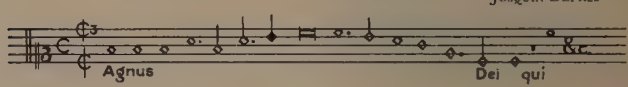


In this score you will notice that by the time the Soprano has finished, the Alto has only reached the note marked "A" in the vocal parts. Similarly, the tenor has finished when the Bass has only reached "B." It is obvious that Soprano and Tenor cannot go on singing any longer, there being no more notes left for them to sing. The Alto and Bass parts must therefore leave off when the Soprano and Tenor do, no matter how many more notes remain in their part. It was usual (though it is not done in this instance) to indicate the concluding note (of a part thus leaving off in the middle) by the sign ⁇ or ⌒ placed over it.

Another point to be noted is that in music of this period, although the final note in the vocal parts might be written as a Breve, a Long, or even a Maxima (*i.e.* a double Longa), it does not necessarily mean that the note actually does have that value. The rule was that the last note of any given part must be held on until the other parts had ceased moving, and that the final chord (resulting from all the parts having come to a standstill) must be at least a Breve in length. This will explain the apparent discrepancy of the final notes in this score having different values from their corresponding notes in the vocal parts.

I give one more illustration—a trio from Josquin's Mass *L'homme armé*. It is written on a single stave, but the three time-signatures on that stave give the resulting trio, as I shall show.

JOSQUIN DEPRÈS



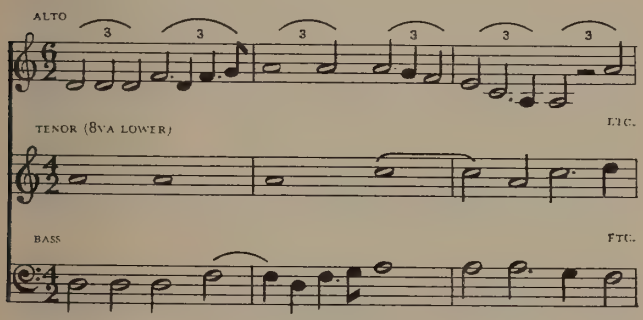
The top time-signature is a semicircle followed by the figure 3. This is only another way of indicating "Imperfect Time with the Greater Prolation"—*i.e.* in other words, two Semibreves to the Breve, and *three* Minims to the Semibreve.

The middle time-signature indicates "Imperfect Time with the Lesser Prolation"—*i.e.* two Semibreves to the Breve, and two Minims to the Semibreve.

The bottom signature is also "Imperfect Time with the Lesser Prolation." You will naturally ask, "If both have the same time-signature and the notes are identical, that would mean that the middle and bottom parts would move in fifths which (as poor old Euclid would say) is absurd." So they would, but for the stroke through the latter time-signature. That indicates *double speed* (as it also does in the top signature). Thus (in the score) Semibreves will become Minims; Minims become Crotchets, and so on.

Now as to the pitch of the respective parts. The top part is pitched as written. The parts below it had to be pitched (according to rule) at intervals of a fourth and a fifth alternately. That gives us therefore the Bass (in this instance) an octave below the top part.

Now let us see how it works out:



I think I have said enough to give a faint idea of the intricacies of this ancient Belgian music. As an instance of the difficulties it presents even to the initiated, this actual example from Glareanus's Dodecachordon is

scored by Bohn (its German editor) and Bellerman* with different results. If these learned authorities can contradict each other, which of *us* is safe?

The difficulty of making anything like an exhaustive study of the old Belgian masters is considerable, as nothing like a *corpus* is in print. Di Lasso has fared best, as the Breitkopf edition of his "Complete Works" has reached twenty volumes, ten containing sacred compositions and ten secular. But in this edition no Masses are yet given, to say nothing of his Magnificats, Lamentations, etc. English readers will find in Stainer's "Dufay and his Contemporaries" a valuable collection of pieces by the very early writers together with a critical examination of their harmonic structure. The student who approaches them for the first time will have some difficulty in attuning his twentieth-century ears to the music, especially if he attempts to play them on the pianoforte. It is quite hopeless to convey an idea of Polyphonic music through this medium. The only way is to collect one or two enthusiasts who will *sing* it in parts. It will sound crude at first, but when the ear has become accustomed to bare fifths and such like details, one begins gradually to experience a curious pleasure in the mere vocalising of the music, and a certain degree of insight into the composer's mental processes is engendered. One has to remember that from unisonous Plainsong to even the simplest combination of notes in chord form was a tremendous step. And before we condemn bare fifths as intolerable (because to our "sensitive" modern ears they are so), would it not be well to pause a moment and ask ourselves whether the delight of the medieval singer in bare fifths did really indicate less sensitive ears than we possess today? Might it not be that his ears were *more* sensitive, and that the natural harmonics which the modern ear fails to detect were keenly felt by him, and gave to the bare fifth that grandeur and distinction which

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**Mensuralnoten und Taktzeichen, Part II.*

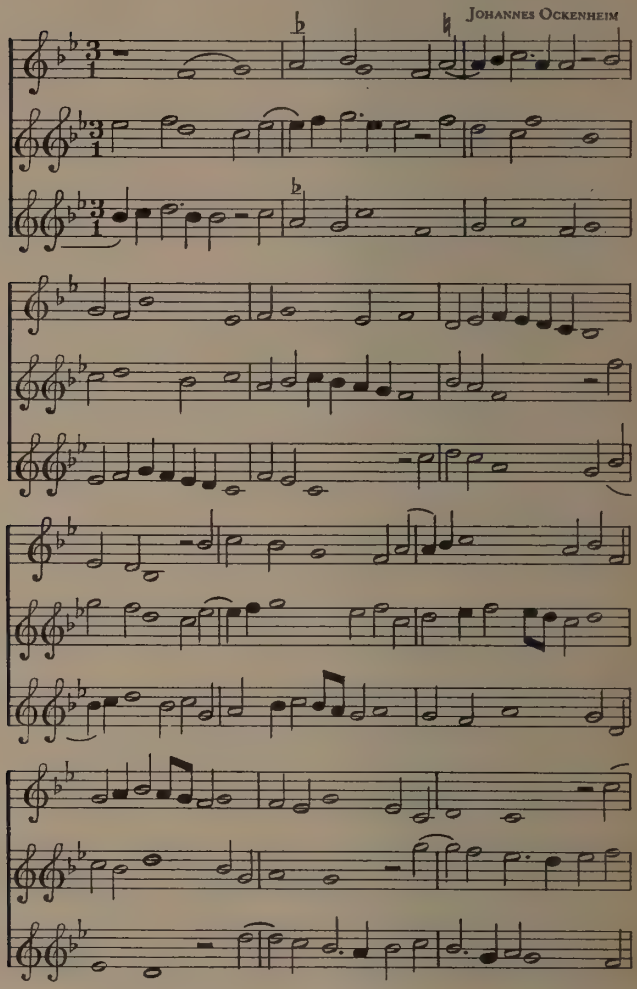
bare fifths always have when sounded in a great cathedral or other resonant building? I do not wish to be dogmatic, but I have a strong feeling that the ears of Polyphonic musicians *were* keener than ours as they had no "tempered" claviers to debauch them. Every choirmaster today realises how difficult it is to get major thirds sung in perfect tune. I used to find it so when I had to perform choral music constantly with organ or pianoforte accompaniment. With the choir which I conducted for twenty-three years, and which was devoted to unaccompanied singing of Polyphonic music, I found no such difficulty.

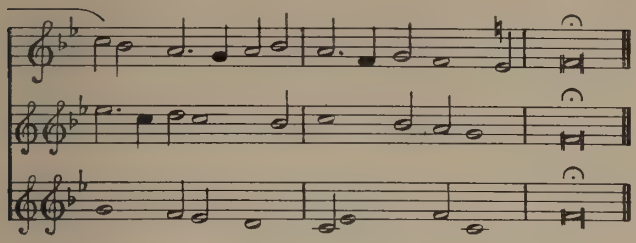
I am convinced, therefore, that the real appreciation of the technical side of this early music only comes after one has familiarised oneself with the vocal idiom of it by *singing*, and not by playing. In addition to Stainer's fine collection, isolated items of the period may be found in the publications of the Paris "Schola Cantorum," and Proske's "Musica Divina." A modern German edition (Breitkopf) of Glareanus gives quite a number in score; but I ought to add that the editor is not always to be relied upon in his solutions.

And while I am on the subject may I say that the Ockenheim canon (from which the extract above is quoted) has been dealt with by both Burney and Hawkins. It may therefore interest readers to know that both these historians came croppers over their respective solutions. Burney begins his solution in the top part and works it out at the fifth below, although the composer's directions read "*Fuga . . . . in epidiatessaron.*" Hawkins does the same but, in addition, works it out in *duple* time, in spite of the circle at the beginning which indicates *triple* time. Wooldridge ("Oxford History of Music," vol. II, p. 215) gives a correct solution of the first twenty bars, and, as the point is an interesting one, I give (for the benefit of any interested students) the solution of the remainder of the canon from the point where Wooldridge's extract leaves off.

CANON (*continued from p. 216, "Oxford History of Music," Vol. II*)

JOHANNES OCKENHEIM

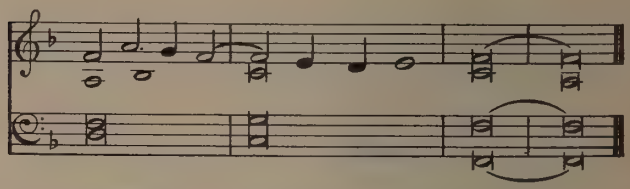




The purely technical and constructive side of Dufay, Ockenheim and their contemporaries is dealt with in the pages of the "Oxford History of Music." From the aesthetic point of view no mere written appreciation can convey so much as can be learned by the actual singing of examples, familiarising one's self with the tonality, and getting inside the mind of the composer.

When one comes to Josquin, however, the task is easy. Once we have grasped the possibilities of the major chord and its inversions, his music may be criticised more or less after modern standards. The intricate skill of his counterpoint does not detract from the definite aesthetic appeal of his work. Like our own Byrd, he dignifies even the commonplace by his touch. Of all the uninspired subjects for musical treatment surely the genealogy in the first chapter of St. Matthew is the most barren, yet the broad sweep of Josquin's setting invests with distinction the mere announcement that "Isaac begat Jacob," and "Josaphat begat Joram," and so on. But in the lengthy motet where he treats of David weeping over Saul and Jonathan he is on surer ground. Curiously impressive is the resort to plain chords (as though to arrest attention) at the opening of the movements "*Considera Israel pro his, qui mortui sunt,*" and "*Nolite annuntiare in Geth, neque annuntiare in compitis Ascalonis*"; or where he cries to the mountains of Gilboa that there be no dew nor rain upon them; or, again, where he calls on the daughters of Israel to weep over Saul. Equally

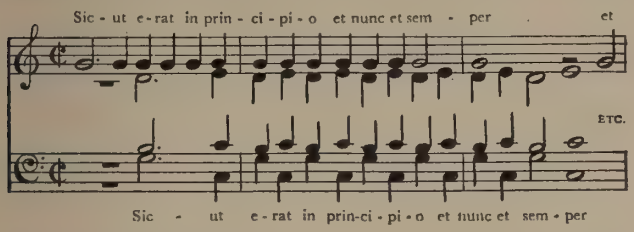
striking is his treatment of the words, "How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thy high places"; introducing as he does the most pathetic form of the sixth Mode, as used in the Lamentations of Tenebrae. He concludes with no note of hopeless gloom or poignant anguish as one would surely do today. In simple major chords (as tragic in their sheer detachment as Handel's orchestral treatment of the same theme) he concludes:



The progression is a familiar one, but taken with its context it here leaves the mark of finality and resignation, and rings true. It is to be hoped that Josquin's complete works will at no distant time see the light and show us the master as he is, not as the examination textbooks paint him—chiefly to be remembered for some musical puns played off on a neglectful King of France.

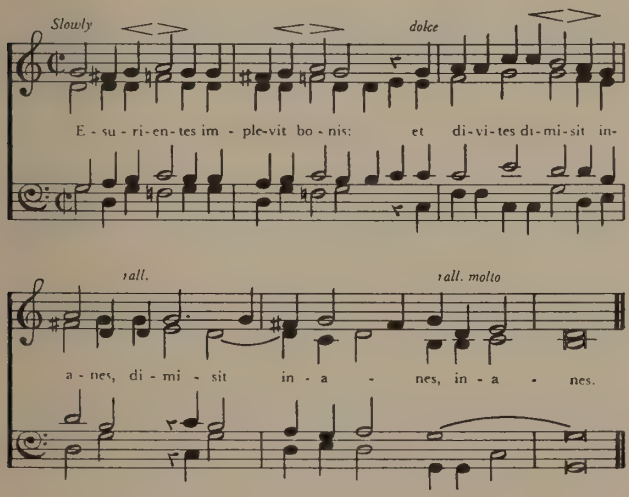
With Lasso (who died 1594) the great Belgian School of Polyphony closes. With all the forceful diction and technical skill of his countrymen he combined the suave smoothness of his Italian compeers. It is impossible here to treat with any degree of detail his motets and secular works, but since the bulk of them will be found in Haberl and Sandberger's (Breitkopf) edition, one may note a few characteristic points. Lasso was evidently a composer of moods, and the "humoursome" would occasionally appear in even his sacred work. When Palestrina reached the Gloria of a Magnificat in the rather "uneventful" eighth Mode he usually sought a broad effect by reiterating the Plainsong theme and brought it to a dignified conclusion. When setting a less formal and

ceremonial theme than the Magnificat Lasso was truly himself, and his grip was sure. But this is how he lets the basses disport themselves in the eighth Mode:

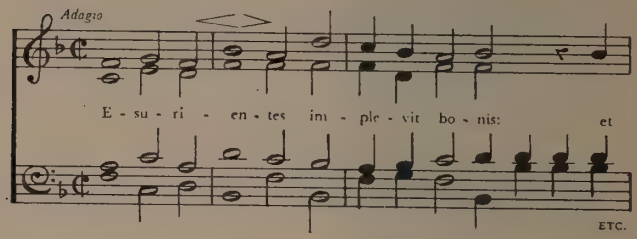


On the other hand, the words "He hath filled the hungry with good things" seems to have held a tender fascination for him, as witness the two following examples (the former from the same Magnificat in which he permits the basses to "maffick" as shown above):

I



II



His exultant mood is well expressed in his *Surrexit Pastor bonus*, for five voices, while for sheer tenderness his *Justorum animae*, or *Gustate et videte quoniam est Dominus* ("Oh taste and see how gracious the Lord is") are amongst the most touching things in music.

One would like to dwell on his Masses, where he is most often at his best, and where his every mood has full play. It is easy now to procure four very beautiful ones—*Quinti toni*, *Puisque j'ay perdu*, *Qual donna* and *Douce memoire*, and the student would find himself well repaid for the time spent over them. He ought to be warned, however, that the edition of *Puisque j'ay perdu* now on the market is an abbreviated one, to the detriment of the music. He will find in many libraries, however, a correct edition, in an out-of-print volume of Proske's "Musica Divina."

One would like to give quotations from all three, as well as from the works of Willaert and others. But it must suffice to say that to obtain a good understanding of the technique of this great School of Composition the student must go to such treatises as I have named, and not to the textbooks; he will thus make himself acquainted with the craftsmanship of the period. But a *real* understanding can only be acquired by a study of the music itself. It will then be seen to be no curious survival of purely antiquarian interest, but a living art-form which has grown old with the passing of years, but which (unlike the music of yesterday) can never grow "old-fashioned."

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